

# READINGS IN INDIAN HISTORY POLITICS AND PHILOSOPHY

SRI AUROBINDO • ABUL KALAM AZAD  
ACHARYA VINOBA BHAVE  
NETAJI BOSE • SURENDRANATH DASGUPTA  
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SWAMI DAYANANDA SARASWATI  
GURUDEV TAGORE • LOKAMANYA TILAK  
SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

and many other major Indian  
historians, philosophers and political thinkers

EDITED BY  
PROFESSOR K. SATCHIDANANDA MURTY  
ALLIED PUBLISHERS PRIVATE LTD

Professor Satchidananda Murty's selection of readings from the works of almost all modern major Indian historians, philosophers and political thinkers offers, in one volume, a historical, political and cultural conspectus hitherto available only from a wide variety of sources.

Part I provides a survey of ancient Indian historiography, the Hindu conception of history, varying interpretations of Indian history in particular and history in general, and gives an outline of historical methodology as well as a panorama of Indian history. Lastly it presents the essence of Indian culture from differing viewpoints. Part II expounds the nature and content of classical Indian political thought, discusses its relevance today, and brings together extracts from the theories of modern political thinkers. The possible approaches to ancient Indian philosophy are discussed in Part III which covers Buddhism, Indian naturalism and the several types of theistic and idealistic monistic Vedanta. Selections from four modern Indian Muslim thinkers and four modern Indian systematists are followed by an interpretation of the ethics of the Dharmasastra, the Vedanta and the Bhakti schools.

This is a valuable source book which communicates to the reader something of the variety, profundity and significance of Indian thought and political and social tradition.

Professor Murty is a leading Indian philosopher who has made important contributions not only in the realms of metaphysics and philosophy of religion, but also in that of political thought.



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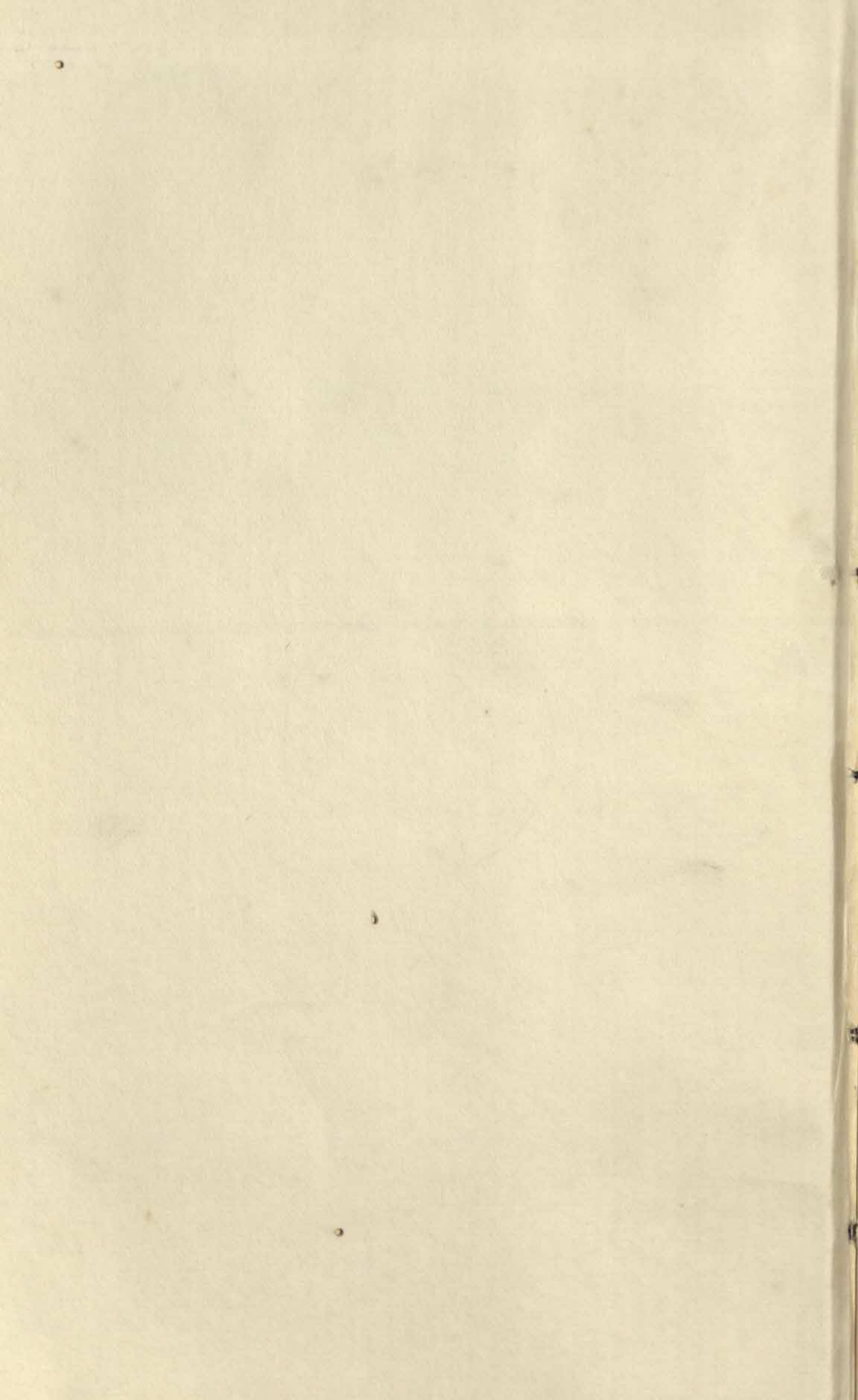
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# READINGS IN INDIAN HISTORY POLITICS AND PHILOSOPHY

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K. SATCHIDANANDA MURTY

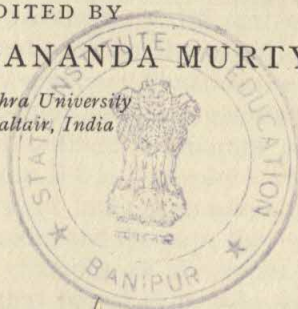
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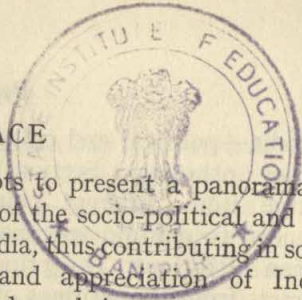
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## PREFACE

This selection of readings attempts to present a panorama of Indian history and a conspectus of the socio-political and the religio-philosophical thought of India, thus contributing in some measure to an understanding and appreciation of India. Exigencies of space have excluded much important material; so it does not pretend to represent in a complete or balanced way the vast field it covers. Any selection is bound to be more or less arbitrary and subjective. Yet, my aim has been not only to provide some glimpses of the long history of India, but also to underline something of the variety, profundity and significance of Indian thought. Care has been taken to collect a number of representative view-points on all the topics, making this book a symposium. The selections are from modern Indian writers only.

Part I devoted to history consists of three sections. Section A starts by giving an account of historiography in ancient India, and an outline of the Hindu conception of history. These are followed by extracts which present three different interpretations of Indian history: the nationalistic, the critical-academic, and the Marxian. The next three extracts illustrate the idealistic, the theistic and the scientific-humanistic approaches to history in general. The last extract outlines the nature of modern historical methodology. Section B tries to evoke a sense of the age-old continuous succession in India of empires, kingdoms and republics, as well as invasions and the ways they were dealt with; and also gives some examples of the types of socio-political order and culture that prevailed in selected epochs. While the ninth extract deals with the Hindu-Muslim encounter, the last three extracts present a picture of society and culture in the British and later periods. As 'the Hindu-Muslim truce within India is the rock on which her democracy rests' (Louis Fischer), the long introduction to the ninth extract has been considered necessary. The aim of this section is to enable the readers to catch a few momentary views on the flux of dynastic and political events in India by focusing attention on some personalities, and on at least a little of the rich and variegated social and cultural history of this vast and ancient land. It must be emphasized that this section is not an attempt to summarize in a systematic and coherent way the entire history

of India—political and cultural; nor is it possible to do so in a brief anthology.<sup>1</sup> Section C presents the essence of Indian culture from different points of view. This Part is not intended to contain specimens of the writings of all the best Indian historians. The principle adopted was to select such extracts from the writings of professional historians as well as others which appeared to throw the most revealing light on certain persons, events and epochs in Indian history, and those which contribute towards an understanding and appreciation of history in general and Indian history and culture in particular. However, many important Indian historians have been included in this Part.

Part II which deals with politics is divided into six sections. Selections in Section A expound the classical Indian conceptions of political science, the nature of the state, the individual and politics, politics and morality, types of ancient Indian states, the substance of Indian political theory, and, lastly, the present relevance of all this. Section B contains the views of some important representative Indians of the British period regarding the ways of attaining freedom and self-government. In Section C are extracts from four modern thinkers each of whom has conceived the ideal society, though there are parallels, similarities, and mutual influences among their ways of thinking. In a way all these four are 'utopian' and original. Section D brings together the ideas of four persons who have occupied (and three are still occupying) important places in the national life of independent India. Although two of them are Hindus and two are Muslims, all of them value individual freedom, democracy, socialism, the secular state, and the parliamentary system of government. In Section E are extracts from the writings and speeches of the head of an organization which wishes to see a Hindu state established in India; of two

<sup>1</sup> The following two are compact and reasonably comprehensive accounts of Indian history: R. C. Majumdar, H. C. Raychaudhuri and K. Datta, *An Advanced History of India*, Macmillan, London; K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *History of India*, three parts, S. Viswanathan, Chetput, Madras. Romila Thapar's recent *A History of India*, Penguin Books, 1966, is a scholarly and illuminating treatment of the period 1000 B.C. to 1526 A.D. Percival Spear's *A History of India* in that series continues the subsequent history, while Stuart Piggott's *Prehistoric India* deals with prehistory. Concise, brilliant and subjective is K. M. Panikkar, *A Survey of Indian History*, Asia Publishing House, Bombay. K. Satchidananda Murty, *The Indian Spirit*, Scientific Book Agency, Calcutta, 1965, is a study of some aspects of the Indian mind and attitudes.



communists (one under whose leadership the Indian Communist Party resolved to strive to achieve its objectives by peaceful means, and another who became the Head of the first democratically elected communist government in the world); and finally of those who stand for civil liberties, liberal democracy and free enterprise. Section F on international relations describes the policies of peaceful co-existence and non-alignment by their chief initiator, gives an appraisal of those policies by two political scientists, includes the views of a Gandhian and a socialist who dreams of a new civilization where capitalism and communism are irrelevant, and ends with a poetic vision of one world and the unity of man. Besides giving an idea of the nature and contents of classical Indian political thought, this Part includes selections from virtually all those modern Indians who have thought independently and constructively in the domain of politics.<sup>1</sup> While most of these are not professional political scientists, about a dozen of those included were or are academic men. It is impossible to include all the well-known political scientists and all the leading politicians of this country worthy of a place in some section or other of this Part. Moreover, works on public administration, empirical studies and monographs on past or modern thinkers lay outside its purview.

Part III, concerned with philosophy, is made up of seven sections. It is not the aim of this Part either to give a history of Indian Philosophy or an account of the classical systems,<sup>2</sup> but to acquaint the reader with a few conceptions of our country's philosophical heritage and expose them to some current dominant trends of philosophical thinking in India. Section A

<sup>1</sup> U. N. Ghoshal, *A History of Hindu Political Theories*, Oxford University Press, London, 1927; H. N. Sinha, *The Development of Indian Polity*, Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1963; and V. P. Varma, *Modern Indian Political Thought*, Lakshmi Narain Agarwal, Agra, 1964, are good expositions of Indian political thought, ancient and modern. For selections from source books, these are good: D. Mackenzie Brown, *The White Umbrella—Indian Political Thought from Manu to Gandhi* (1953); and his *The Nationalist Movement—Indian Political Thought from Ranade to Bhave* (1961), both by California University Press, Berkeley.

<sup>2</sup> Two good compact books on these are: M. Hiriyanna, *Outlines of Indian Philosophy*, London, 1951; Chandradhar Sharma, *A Critical Survey of Indian Philosophy*, Delhi, 1964. Heinrich Zimmer, *Philosophies of India*, 1953, is a brilliant and imaginative book. S. Radhakrishnan and C. E. Moore, *Source Book in Indian Philosophy*, 1957, is the best for readings from original sources.

comprises three selections regarding the nature of ancient Indian philosophy from three different standpoints: idealism, experientialism, and naturalism. In Section B, while an extract from a Sanskritist tries to argue that naturalism was the authentic Indian philosophy of old, another from a great legist and scholar reinterprets Buddhism in an original way. Sections C and D illustrate the several types of Vedānta which in its various forms has been more or less the predominant philosophy of India at most periods of its history. Of these two sections, C is devoted to the theistic types of Vedānta, and D is devoted to the idealist monistic varieties of it. However, it should be mentioned that the second and third extracts in Section C are respectively from the writings of one who relied on his own personal experience and another for whom the only true scripture was the Veda. Selections from some of the greatest mystics and religious leaders of modern India, who had a share in the shaping of its ethos, are found in these sections. The fourth extract in Section D is from the only modern Indian professional philosopher who to a little extent at least has influenced the life and thought of contemporary India. These two sections respectively end with extracts from the writings of perhaps the one Indian University man who has produced a widely noticed book expounding theism, and another who seems to be the most loyal and lucid contemporary academic exponent of Śankara's non-dualism in its purity. As systems of Hindu philosophy other than Vedānta do not have any large following now, they are left out: but in Sections A and B place has been found for the exponents of materialism, naturalism and Buddhism. Section E consists of selections from four famous Muslim thinkers of modern India: the first Indian Muslim to make a critical and scientific approach to Islam and the Koran; a distinguished Shia judge who gave perhaps the most famous, devout and influential modern exposition of Islam; the greatest Muslim philosopher of India; and a distinguished modern commentator on the Koran. In Section F are brought together extracts from four modern Indian thinkers who appear to have consciously attempted to build systems of their own. This is the most difficult section of this book, except for the third extract, written in its author's usual simple and clear style. Whatever be their success and merit, these modern attempts at



system-building deserve our attention. Brief introductory notes are given for the first two more abstruse extracts in this Section. In Section G are three extracts: the first, from a great historian of *Dharmaśāstra*, explains the nature and the *raison d'être* of virtue; the second argues that Vedāntic ethics (of the *Gitā* and the *Brahma Sūtra*) is world-affirming, activist and altruistic; and the third claims that the culmination of Indian religious and ethical thought is found in the Bhakti school. There are a number of other Indian philosophers as important as, or maybe even more important than, some of those included in these sections, who unfortunately had to be left out because they cannot easily and justifiably be classified as theists, or as more or less loyal adherents of Śankara's non-dualistic school, or as system-builders.<sup>1</sup> Lack of space excluded others whose philosophy does not significantly differ from the several types of thinking illustrated in these sections. Persons mainly influenced by classical or contemporary schools of Western philosophy have not yet produced original work of great merit, though they have to their credit excellent monographs on specific problems or on individual thinkers, and have contributed technical papers in professional journals. But as they have not made any deep impact on the academic or public life of our country, no attempt has been made to bring them within the scope of this Part. While most of the contents of this Part may not appear to be philosophical to some of those who follow certain modern Western fashions of philosophy, it should be remembered that in India the majority of philosophers are mostly concerned with the study and production of this or a similar sort of material. On the other hand, possibly some 'orthodox' Indian academic philosophers, who are too much under the spell of the 'six systems', may look askance at the excerpts from the materialists, mystics, social reformers and historians of *Dharmaśāstra*. No philosophical anthology is likely to win universal approbation.

<sup>1</sup> For modern Indian Philosophy, the following books may be consulted: S. Radhakrishnan and J. H. Muirhead, *Contemporary Indian Philosophy*, London, 1958; K. Satchidananda Murty and K. Ramakrishna Rao, *Current Trends in Indian Philosophy*, Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1967; V. S. Naravane, *Modern Indian Thought*, Bombay, 1964; and R. S. Srivastava, *Contemporary Indian Philosophy*, Delhi, 1965; Of these the first two contain original contributions by a number of contemporary philosophers.

Wherever necessary, excerpts have been prefaced with notes giving some background information, and at the end of the book will be found brief biographical sketches of authors from whom selections have been made, followed by bibliographical details regarding the relevant works quoted from. Some diacritical marks have been used for old Sanskrit terms and names. References in most cases have been omitted. The headings for whole extracts as well as paragraphs have been chosen by the present editor. The manuscript of this book was ready for the press in September 1964, and subsequently only a few changes and additions could be made.

I am grateful to the late Dr C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, who was Vice-Chancellor of Banaras and Annamalai Universities, and Dr S. Gopal, Reader in South Asian History, University of Oxford, both of whom scrutinized the outlines of the first two parts of this project in its early stages and gave their approval, though the entire responsibility for the plan as well as the actual selections is mine. Regarding the choice of Muslim thinkers included, I had the benefit of consulting Professor Wilfrid Cantwell Smith, World Religions Centre, Harvard University, and Professor Syed Vahiduddin of Delhi University. Discussions with my cousin Shri K. Venkateswara Rao enabled me to understand better the Hindu-Muslim Encounter and the Freedom Movement. Dr K. Venkateswarlu, Reader in Political Science, Andhra University, gave me valuable assistance in connection with the first two parts. He also compared and checked the typescript of the first two parts with the original sources, while Dr B. V. Kishan, Reader in Philosophy, Andhra University, did this for the third part, and assisted me in the arrangement of the notes on authors, and bibliography. Dr K. Sundaram, Lecturer in History, Andhra University, read all the editorial notes in the three parts as well as the notes on the authors and checked their dates. My sons and some of my associates in the Department of Philosophy, Andhra University, helped in correcting the typescript, and calculating the length of each extract. I am indebted for their kindness to all these gentlemen.

K. SATCHIDANANDA MURTY

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PART I

# HISTORY

'If we are to make progress, we must not repeat history but make new history. We must add to the inheritance left by our ancestors.'

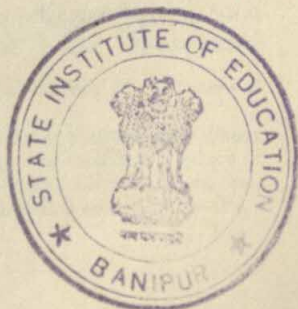
—Mahatma Gandhi  
(*Young India*, May 6, 1926)

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PART I

# HISTORY

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# A

## HISTORY: ITS CONCEPTION, INTERPRETATION AND METHODOLOGY

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### I

#### HISTORY IN ANCIENT INDIA

R. C. MAJUMDAR<sup>1</sup>

##### *Ideas of History*

In ancient India the idea of history, as a branch of knowledge, was at the beginning a very comprehensive one,<sup>2</sup> but gradually some of its important aspects developed into separate and independent subjects like *Arthaśāstra*, *Dharmaśāstra*, and *Purāṇa*. That part of it which was concerned with genealogy and chronicles of kings, and events of a political nature, and thus makes the nearest approach to our modern conception of history, became by itself an independent subject, under such names as *Itivṛtta*, *Itihāsa*, etc. It is highly likely that separate works, dealing with this subject alone, existed in ancient times, but we have no actual specimen of such works, and all that we know of them has survived only as a chapter in the extensive *Purāṇa* texts, whose authors must have freely drawn upon these works. So far as can be judged from these extant summaries the historical works were more or less of the nature of chronicles which recorded the names of kings and their regnal years, and gave brief accounts of the events associated with their reigns. There were good collections of materials for compiling such chronicles, and even though the general practice of writing such political histories gradually declined, it never disappeared

<sup>1</sup> R. C. Majumdar, 'Idea of History in Sanskrit Literature' in *Historians of India, Pakistan and Ceylon*, pp. 24-7.

<sup>2</sup> In the earlier part of this paper Professor Majumdar showed that *Itihāsa* (history) originally included everything concerning man outside the sphere of religion, e.g. traditions concerning social and political theories, laws, etc. Gradually it came to mean what actually happened and a record of it.—Ed.

altogether. . . . We have definite proof of the existence of materials for political history. Of the other aspects of history, such as social and economic conditions of the people, we have reference to the collection of useful data for this purpose, and even incidental references to their utilization in treatises like Kautilya's *Arthaśāstra*, but there is no systematic book on the subject.

Not only were there materials for history, but the method of working them into a systematic treatise was not unknown either. Of course the method was very defective in many respects. The myths and legends were not always distinguished from historical facts, and not infrequently overburdened them. Sometimes historical events were treated merely as backgrounds for display of poetical skill, rhetorical display, or ethical maxims, and as a means of religious propaganda. Sometimes the ideal of history as an accurate delineation of past events was sacrificed in making it a source of entertainment.

But in spite of all these defects the ancient Hindus were not lacking in a correct appreciation of the true ideals and methods of history. This is definitely proved by the general principles laid down by Kalhaṇa and his great work *Rājatarangīnī*. . . . Both in the theory and in its practical application Kalhaṇa's *Rājatarangīnī* shows the high-water mark of historical knowledge reached by the ancient Hindus. Judged by any standard except the very modern one, the level of excellence attained by this work is very high, and though far inferior to three or four works of great genius, it can easily claim an honoured place among the historical works of ancient and medieval ages. In any case this one work is sufficient to prove that the ancient Hindus did not lack true historical sense, and there was no inherent defect in their mental outlook or intellectual development which rendered them incapable of producing good historical literature.

#### *Absence of Historical Literature*

Still the fact remains that except Kalhaṇa's *Rājatarangīnī*, which is merely a local history of Kashmir, there is no other historical text in the whole range of Sanskrit literature which makes even a near approach to it, or may be regarded as history in the proper sense of the term. This is a very strange



phenomenon, for there is hardly any branch of human knowledge or any topic of human interest which is not adequately represented in Sanskrit literature. The absence of real historical literature is therefore naturally regarded as so very unusual that even many distinguished Indians cannot bring themselves to recognize the obvious fact, and seriously entertain the belief that there were many such historical texts, but that they have all perished.

A little reflection would convince anybody of the error of this view. In the first place, it would be strange indeed that ravages of men and nature should have marked as special victims only the standard literary works on history, and that also in such a thorough manner that only a single representative work remains to tell the tale of this wholesale destruction. . . . Secondly, there is a complete absence of reference to any such historical work in the vast Sanskrit literature still extant. . . . There are many Sanskrit texts and commentaries which refer to old kings, but there is not the least reference to any historical work containing accounts of them. . . . Thirdly, Kalhaṇa was a conscientious writer and must have taken all possible steps to acquaint himself with the history of the country. (But) it is obvious that he had no access to any text dealing with the history of Northern India before his time.

Those who do not subscribe to the theory of wholesale destruction are faced with a singularly difficult problem. Why did the Hindu intellect, which was capable of writing the *Rājataranginī*, shrink from similar attempts to write the history of India as a whole, or, even if that idea were too ambitious, of the mighty empires that rose and fell in different parts of India? Various explanations have been offered, but they would hardly bear scrutiny. We have space here to refer to only a few of them, such as peculiarities of Indian psychology which denied any meaning or value to history, the absence of national sentiment, and the lack of that scientific attitude of mind which seeks to find natural causes for events of nature.

As regards the first, it will suffice to state that historical chronicles of an elementary or romantic type existed in large numbers, and it is difficult to conceive of a psychological state of mind in which men revel at the delineation of historical persons and events in a crude form, but shrink from giving it a



developed literary form or a truly historical shape, which was not altogether foreign to them.

It has been urged that national feeling, roused by a foreign invasion, is a powerful aid to the writing of history; the example of Greece shows that it is evoked mostly in democratic states, and was therefore not noticeable in India to the same measure. We know really too little of Indian history to form a definite conclusion on this point, but the prolonged resistance of confederate democratic states of North Bihar against the growing power of Magadha, the stubborn and heroic opposition of democratic peoples in the Punjab and Afghanistan against Alexander, and the successful fight of the Mālavas, Yaudheyas and other republican states against the foreign conquerors of a later date, do not seem to have been taken into consideration in formulating such a theory.

As regards scientific attitude, it is necessary to point out that both Herodotus and Thucydides flourished in an age when the Greek military operations were guided by the position of the sun and moon, and the superstitious belief in the effect of an eclipse caused a disastrous defeat in the Peloponnesian War; when Anaxagoras was condemned to death by the General Assembly of Athens because he denied that the sun and moon were divine beings; when the study of astronomy was forbidden, and the Athenian democracy forced Socrates to put an end to his life by poison for 'not worshipping the gods whom the city worships'. If we remember that Āryabhaṭa, who discovered the true causes of eclipse, the rotatory motion of the earth round the sun, and many other brilliant scientific truths, flourished in an age which has been compared to the Periclean age of Athens for its intellectual and artistic achievement, but which produced no historical literature, we can hardly explain the absence of a scientific attitude of mind.

As a matter of fact the various theories put forward to explain the absence of history in India fail to take note of the fact that the problem that we have to solve is not the lack of historical writings, of which we have a fair number of specimens, but the absence of finished products like the *Rājataranginī*. . . . None of the extant theories can sufficiently explain this phenomenon. The obvious fact remains that India lacked neither historical materials nor historical chronicles, and even

the popular demand for, or interest in, historical knowledge was not altogether absent, but still no other first-rate writer like Kalhaṇa appeared in this branch of literature. This fact seems to be more an accident than the result of any definite cause or causes. The absence of such a writer diminished, or led to the lack of popular interest in history, and these two factors acted and reacted on each other. . . .

## 2

## THE HINDU PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY

BUDDHA PRAKASH<sup>1</sup>

We have no connected account of the history of the Hindus written by them in their own language. . . . This seemingly historyless character of Hindu genius is the outcome of the fundamental postulates of the thought and civilization of the Hindu people. The Hindu view of life is based on an organic conception of nature. According to it, nature is so organically constituted that all its acts emerge from the convergence of the functions of its whole system and effect in turn the working of its whole process. A seed sprouting and growing into a tree evokes and involves the operation of the whole scheme of being. Its development depends on climatic action, alluvial function, osmotic process and favourable environment no less than on the potentiality of the seed. . . .

The organic conception of nature implicit in Indian philosophy expresses itself in the idea of the primeval being (*ādīpuruṣa*) adumbrated in *Ṛig-Veda* X, 90, and of the macrocosmic being (*virātrūpa*) developed in *Bhagavadgītā* XI, 32-4. In the suggestive imagery of the primeval being of the *Ṛig-Veda* there is a linking of social factors with physical forces through the medium of a cosmic order. . . . In the *Bhagavadgītā* the grand and majestic spectacle of the macrocosmic being comprising the processes of the whole universe in the functions of his body is presented in an epic style. The macrocosmic being

<sup>1</sup> Buddha Prakash, 'The Hindu Philosophy of History' in *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. XVI, No. 4, pp. 494-505.



is the whole cosmic system personified. . . . He is both life and death and the quintessence of all that exists. The role of the individual is only to act as a means to execute his will or to behave as a *nimittamātra*.

From the aforesaid standpoint of Hindu philosophy the historical process is something which develops of itself in an autonomous manner transcending and carrying in its sweep the individuals participating in it. In other words, historical evolution is a flow and convergence of impersonal or transpersonal forces, which are capable of being expressed in organic categories or biological images. This is tantamount to the view that movements and not men make history. This view implies that historical events are the results of the needs, actions and volitions—conscious and subconscious—of a large number of individuals constituting a society, who cannot be separately named or described. The development of the needs, actions and volitions of the people as a whole proceeds in correlation and co-presence with the course of material environment. It conditions and is conditioned by external circumstances. This interdependent development of human spirituality and material environment finds its expression in a series of individuals who chance to be at the points of vantage that qualify them for their respective roles. In the words of Morris R. Cohen these 'great men are the points of intersection of great social forces'.

A prominent characteristic of this conception of history is an arrangement and classification of historical events into ages, epochs and periods which unroll themselves in cyclical or linear movements.—The traditional division of the historical process according to the Hindus is four-fold, *Kṛta*, *Tretā*, *Dvāpara* and *Kali*. In the first age virtue (*dharma*) reigns supreme, in the second it declines, in the third it becomes sparse and in the fourth it disappears.

The distinguishing feature of the Hindu conception of the periodic classification of history is its moral import and ethical tenor. According to it the duration of the ages is not chronologically immutable but rather depends upon the actions and character of the people. In other words, the succession of ages is symbolic of the psychological development of man and represents the stages of the moral progress of mankind. This view of the historical ages is best enunciated in an old text



pertaining to the *Ṛig-Veda*, called *Aitareya-Brāhmaṇa* (Ch. 33, *Khaṇḍa* 3.) In it, in a parable of the animosity of Indra and King Hariscandra, the former gives a very interesting discourse to the latter's son Rohita, exhorting him to keep moving without relaxation. In course of this very suggestive discourse he observes, 'the fortune of a sitting man is static, of an idle man becomes still, of a sluggard sleeps and of a moving man moves forward. Kali is sleeping, Dvāpara is shaking off (of sleep), Tretā is rising and Kṛta is moving. The moving man gets honey and tastes the fruit of *Ficus glomerata*. Look at the glory of the sun who never stops moving.' In this exhortation the succession of historical periods is equated with the unfolding of the psychological stages of man. The phenomena of sleep, awakening and activity which constitute the cyclic routine of the life of man are stated to underly the turnover of the periods of history. Thus Kali is the 'age of sleep', Tretā and Dvāpara are the 'age of awakening' and Kṛta is the 'age of activity'. On this showing the process of history characterized by the rhythmic succession of periods is the counterpart of the daily life of man marked by the recurring phenomena of sleep, awakening and activity. As every individual acts, sleeps and awakes, so every group of individuals also feels the urge of action, exhaustion and again of action. There is thus a unique harmony and symmetry between the tendency of an individual and that of a group of them. We can perceive the work of the rhythm of action, sleep and awakening in the histories of castes, states, regions, institutions and even cultures.

History is a collective and impersonal process according to the Hindu view of life. This means that the totality of the individuals composing and participating in it shapes its course. The persons who occupy prominent positions act only as the instruments of the will of the people as a whole. Hence it follows that when the people as a whole are active, it is the 'age of activity', when they are not active and lapse into inertia, it is an 'age of sleep'; and when they again become active and shake off their inertia, it is an 'age of awakening'.

I do not mean to suggest that the author of this (*Brāhmaṇa*) text conceived of the process of history on the basis of the above interpretation just as I have done. Yet there is no doubt that the four ages did not signify to him fixed and predetermined periods

of time that are bound to run their set courses in spite of the efforts of man; rather, they meant to him the stages of the moral and mental development of man in which human effort is the primary determining factor. That this conception was not always overlooked is manifest from the fact that according to the traditional belief the defeat and expulsion of the Śakas by Vikramāditya in 58 BC marked the beginning of the Kṛta-yuga or the age of truth. The Vikrama era was, for several centuries after its advent, called the Kṛta era. Later on when Yaśodharman Viṣṇuvardhana crushed the Hūṇas in the sixth century AD he was conceived of as the Kalki avatāra or the incarnation of God that is destined to appear at the end of the Kali age, as has been convincingly shown by the famous Indologist K. P. Jayaswal. Still later in the latter half of the seventeenth century the advent of Shivaji was hailed as the coming of the divine incarnation signifying the end of the Kali age. Thus we observe that in spite of the traditional fixed periods of history which constitute the bedrock of the chronology of the *Purāṇas* the conception of these periods as phases of the moral and mental progress and regress of man was present in the minds of the Indian people. They stressed the moral aspect of the historical periods besides their chronological conception and the way in which this view was possible was the belief in the rise and fall of virtue (*dharma*) as the basis of the succession of ages. When virtue (*dharma*) was once accepted as the basis of the periodic arrangement of history, the freedom of human will and effort followed as a corollary. Hence a moral footing was given to a natural process.

## 3

## A NATIONALIST'S INTERPRETATION OF INDIAN HISTORY

K. M. MUNSHI<sup>1</sup>

I have seen and felt the form, continuity, and meaning of India's past. History, as I see it, is being consciously lived by Indians.

<sup>1</sup> K. M. Munshi, Foreword to *The History and Culture of the Indian People—The Vedic Age*, edited by R. C. Majumdar, pp. 7-12.



Attempts to complete what has happened in the past form no small part of our modern struggle; there is a conscious as well as an unconscious attempt to carry life to perfection, to join the fragments of existence, and to discover the meaning of the visions which they reveal. It is not enough, therefore, to conserve, record and understand what has happened: It is necessary also to assess the nature and direction of the momentous forces working through the life of India in order to appreciate the fulfilment which they seek.

Some years ago, therefore, I defined the scope of history as follows: 'To be a history in the true sense of the word, the work must be the story of the people inhabiting a country. It must be a record of their life from age to age presented through the life and achievements of men whose exploits become the beacon lights of tradition; through the characteristic reaction of the people to physical and economic conditions; through political changes and vicissitudes which create the forces and conditions which operate upon life; through characteristic social institutions, beliefs and forms; through literary and artistic achievements; through the movements of thought which from time to time helped or hindered the growth of collective harmony; through those values which the people have accepted or reacted to and which created or shaped their collective will; through efforts of the people to will themselves into an organic unity. The central purpose of a history must, therefore, be to investigate and unfold the values which age after age have inspired the inhabitants of a country to develop their collective will and to express it through the manifold activities of their life.'

Generation after generation, during their school or college career, were told about the successive foreign invasions of the country, but little about how we resisted them and less about our victories. They were taught to decry the Hindu social system; but they were not told how this system came into existence as a synthesis of political, social, economic and cultural forces; how it developed in the people the tenacity to survive catastrophic changes for millennia; how it protected life and culture in times of difficulty by its conservative strength and in favourable times developed an elasticity which made ordered progress possible; and how its vitality enabled the



national culture to adjust its central ideas to new conditions.

Readers were regaled with Alexander's short-lived and unfruitful invasion of India; they were left in ignorance of the magnificent empire and still more enduring culture which the Gangetic Valley had built up at the time. Lurid details of intrigues in the palaces of the Sultans of Delhi—often a camp of bloodthirsty invaders—are given, but little light is thrown on the exploits of the race of heroes and heroines who for centuries resisted the Central Asiatic barbarians when they flung themselves on this land in successive waves. Gruesome stories of Muslim atrocities are narrated, but the harmony which was evolved in social and economic life between the two communities remains unnoticed. The Mutiny of 1857—the British name for the Great National Revolt—gave the readers a glimpse of how the brave foreigner crushed India; it is only outside the so-called historical studies that the reader found how at the time patriotic men of all communities in most parts of India rallied round the last Mughal Emperor of Delhi, the national symbol, to drive out the hated foreigner.

The multiplicity of our languages and communities is widely advertised, but little emphasis is laid on certain facts which make India what she is. Throughout the last two millennia, there was linguistic unity. Some sort of a *lingua franca* was used by a very large part of the country; and Sanskrit, for a thousand years the language of royal courts and at all times the language of culture, was predominant, influencing life, language, and literature in most provinces. For over three thousand years, social and family life had been moulded or influenced by the *Dharmaśāstra* texts, containing a comprehensive code of personal law, which, though adapted from time to time to suit every age and province, provided a continuous unifying social force. Āryan, or rather Hindu culture (for there was considerable Dravidian influence) drew its inspiration in every successive generation from Sanskrit works on religion, philosophy, ritual, law and science, and particularly the two epics, the *Mahābhārata* and *Rāmāyana*, and the *Bhāgavata*, underwent recensions from time to time, and became the one irresistible creative force which has shaped the collective spirit of the people. Age after age the best of Indians, from the mythical Vasishtha to the modern Gandhiji, found self-

fulfilment in living up to an ideal of conduct in accordance with a code of life which may be traced back as far as the Upaniṣads.

The British conquest and the benefits of British rule are generally described in histories in 'Rudyard Kipling' style. The impact of western culture, however, came in the wake of the British connection. In our histories we completely lose sight of how this impact awoke the sleeping giant to a consciousness of its ancient strength and modern possibilities; how under the influence of European ideas and British democratic traditions, the Collective Spirit, without losing its grip over the essentials of its culture, adjusted itself to modern conditions, creating new intellectual and artistic movements and making the democratic traditions of Great Britain its own; how, under the European concept of nationalism, Ārya-Dharma (Indian Culture) slowly broadened out into a powerful neo-nationalism seeking a secular democratic state, Indian in conception and technique.

These militaristic-political movements in India were in no wise less vigorous or worldly than similar movements in other parts of the world in the corresponding age. To say that the country was lost in contemplation all the time would be to ignore the salient facts of history.

The role of alien invasions in the history of India, hitherto exaggerated, deserves to be reduced to its appropriate proportions. India, like most other countries, has had its foreign incursions, which, like Mahmud of Ghazni's raids between AD 999 and 1024, glittering episodes from the raiders' point of view, were at best only shaping influences. Of foreign conquests, which changed the course of history and the texture of life and culture, there were only three. First, the Āryan conquests in prehistoric times, which wove the essential pattern of national life and culture. Second, the Turko-Afghan conquests, which introduced Islamic influence into India and added new colours to the pattern of life. These conquests, however, soon lost their character of foreign military occupation, for the conquerors threw in their lot with the country and produced some of its rulers and its most powerful political organizations. This so-called Muslim period, scientifically the Turko-Mughal period, dominated the country for about four centuries roughly from AD 1300 to 1700. Third, the British occupation from 1818-1947, [was] perhaps the only period of foreign rule in the sense that the



country was governed essentially by foreigners from a foreign country and in foreign interests. It brought in its wake contact with Europe, a new awakening and a new cultural synthesis.

But during all this period the vitality of the race and culture, altered from time to time in direction and objective, expressed itself with unabated vigour in resistance movements, military, political, and cultural. The history of India is not the story of how she underwent foreign invasions, but how she resisted them and eventually triumphed over them. . . . The modern historian of India must approach her as a living entity with a central continuous urge, of which the apparent life is a mere expression. Without such an outlook it is impossible to understand India, which though a part of it has seceded in search of an independent existence, stands today three hundred and fifty million strong, with a new apparatus of state, determined not to be untrue to its ancient self, and yet to be equal to the highest demands of modern life.

## 4

## A CRITICAL HISTORIAN'S INTERPRETATION OF INDIAN HISTORY

K. M. PANIKKAR<sup>1</sup>

While the unity of Indian culture and its integration within a defined territorial limit has been one of the major factors of world history at least from the sixth century B.C. and was recognized as such by her sister civilizations of Greece, Persia and China, politically India was, till recently, a country of many states and warring dynasties, whose persistent urge towards unity was defeated by geographical factors. The history of India has therefore to be a history of social growth and development and not primarily a political history. . . . The first requisite therefore to a re-writing of the history of the Indian people is to shed the conception of history which was prevalent in Europe until recent times, as the record of the growth and activities of the nation-state.

<sup>1</sup> K. M. Panikkar, *The State and the Citizen*, pp. 104-5, 107-15, 117.



The study of local dynastic histories, without reference to the conditions of India as a whole has led us to the exaggerations of local patriotism which is one of the most dangerous tendencies in India today. . . . It is time we also discarded finally this attempt to build our history on monarchs and dynasties, and viewed it from the point of view of the evolution of the Indian people.

If, as I believe, the history of a people lies in their social, economic and mental evolution through the ages, then the material for it lies not merely in the discoveries of archaeologists and epigraphists—though these are undoubtedly very important—but in the literary records of the people. These are continuous, produced in successive periods and reflect the mind of the period generally more than the conscious records of kings and emperors.

A few of the questions to which the historian of the Indian people now vainly seeks an answer may be stated here mainly as illustrating my point. The first and most important problem which faces the historian of India is the still uncompleted penetration through the ages of a dominant culture over the vast aboriginal population. Our preoccupation with the Āryans has led us in a measure to equate Indian social development with the Āryanization of the country. But it is clear from every available record that from the earliest days the Āryan and the non-Āryan had mingled sufficiently to influence each other and to create a joint culture, which we may well describe as Hinduism. . . . The slow evolution of the Indian people from this vast conglomeration of tribes by the imposition of a common Hindu culture is the primary fact of Indian history and should be the subject of major research.

Another major problem to which Indian historians have to devote their attention is the origin and development of Hindu social institutions and the extent of their prevalence. Again, we have been inclined to think in terms of the universality of Hindu laws and social institutions. This would not bear analysis. Apart from the large population of indigenous tribes, even among the communities which are accepted as orthodox, practices vary very widely. . . . Changes in ideas is another fascinating subject which is of vital importance to an understanding of Indian history.

Another problem that faces the student is the decadence which seems to have overtaken Hindu society in the period between the eighth and the twelfth centuries. . . . It is a major problem for Indian historians to study the question of this widespread decadence, which probably explains the surprisingly ineffective resistance to the Turki invaders from the north-west. India, which was able to resist and throw back the armies of the great Khalifs, the greatest military power of the time, when they tried to penetrate into Gujarat and Rajasthan, lay prostrate before the adventurers from Central Asia. The vigour which enabled the Indian people successfully to resist the Śakas, the Hūṇas and others who overturned empires elsewhere seems suddenly to have vanished in the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

We have tended to identify the political life of mediaeval India with the conquering expeditions of powerful monarchs and the chaos and confusion that reigned in the interval. The history of the Hindu people, who still constituted the vast majority and who reacted vigorously after a period of prostration, has been generally neglected.

The emphasis on civilization as the subject of historical study naturally enlarges the scope of Indian history, for Indian civilization spread far and wide and created in South-east Asia and in Central Asia Hinduized communities whose cultural and political achievements are legitimately a part of the wider Indian heritage. . . . In fact the history of India, unless it is related to the developments in Central Asia, and in South-east Asia would lose its full significance. Our vision of Indian history therefore requires to be widened, and the evolution and development of social and cultural forces in India have to be related to movements in these regions.



## A MARXIST'S INTERPRETATION OF INDIAN HISTORY

D. D. KOSAMBI<sup>1</sup>

The light-hearted sneer 'India has had some episodes, but no history' is used to justify lack of study, grasp, and intelligence on the part of foreign writers about India's past. The considerations that follow will prove that it is precisely the episodes—lists of dynasties and kings, tales of war and battle spiced with anecdote, which fill school texts—that are missing from Indian records. Here, for the first time, we have to reconstruct a history without episodes, which means that it cannot be the same type of history as in the European tradition.—History is defined as the presentation, in chronological order, of successive developments in the means and relations of production.

India, for all its great literary heritage, has produced no historical writers. . . . There remains only one Indian chronicle worth the name, the *Rājataranginī* by a Kashmirian named Kalhaṇa. . . . For the rest of the country, till the Muslim period, we have nothing even as good as Kalhaṇa (who was brought up close to the court with full access to all sorts of records), while Kalhaṇa himself lapses into legend, myth, or pure romance. . . . The sources for the older period survive as *purāṇas* (= 'the ancient stories'), which in their present form are only religious fables and cant.—From our material, it is still impossible to say where the great theme-battles of the two epics *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata* were fought, let alone when—if indeed they represent any historical events at all.—This shows how futile the direct procedure would be for ancient India, where the intrinsic source-material (such as that in the two great epics) is poor, while archaeology has so far achieved nothing of correlative historical value.—The numerous epigraphic finds, a by-product of desultory archaeological work, do not suffice either to restore a reasonably comprehensive dynastic list or to define the regnal years and complete terri-

<sup>1</sup> D. D. Kosambi, *An Introduction to the Study of Indian History*, pp. 1-2, 4-8, 10-13, VII-VIII.



torial holdings of those Indian kings whose names survive.—The alternative for the undocumented period was philological. Common or similar words denoting kinship in the Indo-European languages seemed to yield information regarding Āryan social organization in their original homeland, before their numerous tribal groups separated for migration in various directions. That the words might have migrated with the social institution and concept of relationship, without substantial travel on the part of the Āryan people, was not considered a serious possibility.

We are thus led inevitably to concentrate upon successive developments, in chronological order, in the means and relations of production. Only this can tell us how people lived at any period. . . . Social organization cannot be more advanced than the instruments of production will allow, particularly when man has progressed from the food-gathering quasi-animal stage to that of food production, which definitely raises him above the animal. . . . Our definition (of history) has the merit of forcing us to notice and to account for certain features peculiar to Indian society and history, such as caste, or the remarkable lack of historical sense among all but a few of the most recent intellectuals. Certainly, this is the only definition known which will allow a reasonable treatment of pre-literate history, generally termed 'pre-history'. The technique of applying the definition in practice means not only the collation of the written record with archaeology, but the interpretation of each of these in conjunction with ethnographic data.—

We have to go much deeper than this for the grasp of Indian tradition. . . . The social clusters that survive even in the heart of fully developed areas, say in and around cities, with others which mark all strata of a caste society as having developed at some older date from the absorption of tribal groups, constitute priceless evidence for the interpretation of some ancient record or archaeological find.—Concentration upon the study of religion, superstition, ritual can lead us very far away from history; to neglect their study altogether throws away valuable features of the superstructure that indicate real changes in the basis.

This is far from the economic determinism which its opponents so often take it to be. Ideas (including superstition)

become a force, once they have gripped the masses; they supply the forms in which men become conscious of their conflicts and fight them out. No historian may dismiss or ignore such ideas nor can he be regarded as having fulfilled his task unless he shows why, how, and when the grip was secured. . . . The adoption of Marx's thesis does not mean blind repetition of all his conclusions (and even less, those of the official, party-line Marxists) at all times.

India had never a classical slave economy in the same sense as Greece or Rome.—Most [Indian] villages produce neither metals nor salt, two essentials that had mostly to be obtained by exchange, hence imply some commodity production. . . . The villages did not exist 'from times immemorial'. The advance of plough-using agrarian village economy over tribal India is a great historical achievement by itself. Secondly, even when the size of the village unit remains unchanged, the density of these units plays a most important role; the same region with two villages, or two hundred, or twenty thousand cannot bear the same form of superstructure, nor be exploited by the same type of state mechanism. Conversely, the progressive weight of this superstructure changes land ownership within the village. Change of quantity ultimately means change of quality. . . . We cannot [also] let pass without challenge Marx's statement 'Indian society has no history at all, at least no known history. What we call its history, is but the history of successive intruders who founded their empires on the passive basis of that unresisting and unchanging village society.' In fact, the greatest periods of Indian history, the Mauryan, Śātavāhana, Gupta owed nothing to intruders; they mark precisely the formation and spread of the basic village society, or the development of new trade centres.

For all that, the theoretical basis remains Marxist—as I understand the method. It seems to me that every historian has some theory, tacit or explicit, upon which his work is based. . . . Marx had a scientific theory, which might have to be extended like those, in other fields, of his contemporaries Gauss, Maxwell, Darwin, Mendeleev, but which still has the equal merit of working in practice, of yielding verifiable predictions.—Thus, the more important question is not who



was king, nor whether the given region had a king, but whether its people used a plough, light or heavy, at the time. The type of kingship, as a function of the property relations and surplus produced, depends upon the method of agriculture, not conversely.

The subtle mystic philosophies, tortuous religions, ornate literature, monuments teeming with intricate sculpture, and delicate music of India all derive from the same historical process that produced the famished apathy of the villager, senseless opportunism and termite greed of the 'cultured' strata, sullen unco-ordinated discontent among the workers, the general demoralization, misery, squalor, and degrading superstition. The one is a result of the other, the one is the expression of the other. The most primitive implements produced a meagre surplus which was expropriated by a correspondingly archaic social mechanism. This maintained a few in that cultured leisure which they took as a mark of their innate superiority to the vast majority living in degradation. It is necessary to grasp this in order to appreciate the fact that history is not a sequence of haphazard events but is made by human beings in the satisfaction of their daily needs. . . . The proper study of history in a class society means analysis of the differences between the interests of the classes on top and of the rest of the people.

## 6

## HISTORY: AN IDEALIST'S VIEW

S. RADHAKRISHNAN<sup>1</sup>

Human history is not a series of secular happenings without any shape or pattern; it is a meaningful process, a significant development. Those who look at it from the outside are carried away by the wars and battles, the economic disorders and the political upheavals, but below in the depths is to be found the truly majestic drama, the tension between the limited effort

<sup>1</sup> S. Radhakrishnan, *Eastern Religions and Western Thought*, pp. 1-2, 89-90, 328, 83-85, 91.



of man and the sovereign purpose of the universe. Man cannot rest in an unresolved discord. He must seek for harmony, strive for adjustment. His progress is marked by a series of integrations, by the formation of more and more comprehensive harmonies. When any particular integration is found inadequate to the new conditions, he breaks it down and advances to a larger whole. While civilization is always on the move, certain periods stand out clearly marked as periods of intense cultural change. The sixth century BC, the transition from antiquity to the Middle Ages and from the Middle Ages to modern times in Europe, were such periods. None of these, however, is comparable to the present tension and anxiety which are world-wide in character and extend to every aspect of human life. We seem to feel that the end of one period of civilization is slowly drawing into sight.

There is an historical fulfilment and destiny for the cosmic process. Mankind is engaged in a pursuit that tends towards a definite goal. Truth will be victorious on earth, and it is the nature of the cosmic process that the finite individual is called upon to work through the exercise of his freedom for that goal through ages of struggle and effort. The soul has risen from the sleep of matter, through plant and animal life, to the human level, and is battling with ignorance and imperfection to take possession of its infinite kingdom. It is absolute not in its actual empirical condition but in its potentiality, in its capacity to appropriate the Absolute. The historical process is not a mere external chain of events, but offers a succession of spiritual opportunities. Man has to attain a mastery over it and reveal the higher world operating in it. The world is not therefore an empty dream or an eternal delirium.

Even as human personality depends on the persistence of memory, social life depends on the persistence of tradition. Tradition is society's memory of its own past. If we tear up the individual from his traditional roots he becomes abstract and aberrant. . . . History is something organic, a phase of man's terrestrial destiny as essential for him as memory is for personal identity. It is the triumph of memory over the spirit of corruption. To forget our social past is to forget our descent.

With our minds anchored in the beyond we are to strive to make the actual more nearly like what it ought to be. . . .

The heart of religion is that man truly belongs to another order, and the meaning of man's life is to be found not in this world but in more than historical reality. His highest aim is release from the historical succession denoted by birth and death. So long as he is lost in the historical process without a realization of the super-historical goal, he is only 'once born' and is liable to sorrow. God and not the world of history is the true environment of our souls. If we overlook this important fact, and make ethics or world affirmation independent of religion or world negation, our life and thought become condescending, though this condescension may take the form of social service or philanthropy. But it is essentially a form of self-assertion and not real concern for the well-being of others. If goodwill, pure love, and disinterestedness are our ideals, then our ethics must be rooted in other-worldliness. This is the great classical tradition of spiritual wisdom.

What is the relation of absolute being to historical becoming, of eternity to time? Is succession, history, progress, real and sufficient in its own right, or does man's deep instinct for the unchanging point to an eternal perfection which alone gives the world meaning and worth? Is the inescapable flux all, or is there anything which abides? Religious consciousness bears testimony to the reality of something behind the visible, a haunting beyond, which both attracts and disturbs, in the light of which the world of change is said to be unreal. . . . The temporal yields a real apprehension of the eternal, though it does not contain or exhaust the eternal. The eternal does not take part in the temporal process as though it were one with it. We see the eternal through the temporal, not face to face but under a veil. Becoming is an imperfect representation of being.



## 7

## HISTORY: A THEIST'S VIEW

K. SATCHIDANANDA MURTY<sup>1</sup>

History signifies either a methodical record of events or the events themselves. . . . History is the temporal revelation of the real, and the real can be conceived in multiple ways, so history too could be interpreted diversely. But the greatest care should be taken to see that history is neither narrated nor interpreted from narrow view-points.

If this truth is grasped there can not be a complete history of any microscopic part of the universe such as for example that of India, of England, of the French revolution or Greek philosophy. . . . No doubt history as narrated can be begun and stopped anywhere we like. But the real history, the march of events, is interwoven in all space-time and each event is interconnected with all its past, present and future. History also cannot be spatially localized. Today we speak of the globe, but do not think in terms of it. There cannot be a completely intelligible history of any one part of the globe. . . . He who conceives himself, his country or his culture as something self-sufficient and rounded off lacks historic sense. History in the real sense, is only for him who sees himself, his country and his culture as an element in a wide concourse that has gone on for aeons of years and will go on doing so. Ultimately no history can be less than world-history. Even an anthropocentric view of history is ridiculous. . . . What is man in perspective? Vanity of vanities. How arrogant it is of him to try to interpret the cosmos in terms of himself! History therefore can only be world-history, or as Spengler would have it, world-as-history. What then is this world-history? It is the expression of the Divine in space-time.

The Biblical philosophy of history is an outstanding development both in profundity and intuition over the Graeco-Roman view. To the Israelitic prophets history is not a meaninglessly cyclic sporadic rise and fall of nations. For them it is the

<sup>1</sup> K. Satchidananda Murty, *The Rhythm of the Real*, pp. 16-20, 24, 26, 28, 29, 34-6.



purposive masterful execution of a divine plan on earth. The destinies of nations are in the Lord's hands. The plan itself transcends human powers of understanding, but fragmentary glimpses of it are vouchsafed to us now and then. History is the working out of purpose—not of man's—but of God's. The purpose is not human, nor is it rational in the way in which we conceive rationality. It is suprarational. The actors in history are not men and women, as Tacitus imagined. God is the sole actor. No doubt every creature wants something and pursues it, but why he wants it is beyond the power of his comprehension. The universe is the means towards the accomplishment of God's purpose. Men and women, cities and civilizations are only vehicles of God's purpose.

The conception of God as active in history was not exclusively held by the Biblical prophets only, as Western writers like Soderblom imagined. Hindu thinkers also grasped this truth. All the *Purāṇas* depict history as the work of the Divine.

This calls forth for a stand-point other than the human, the stand-point of eternity. But history itself is the eternal or to put it in another way, the eternal is in it, but is not exhausted in it. 'This world is the Divine from whence is its (the world's) creation, sustenance and destruction', so Nārada reminds Vyāsa, 'but the Divine surpasses this world.' The world is the performance of the Divine (*vibhoh ceṣṭitam*). It is the dawning of the Divine (*mahānubhāvābhyudaya*). When this Deo-centric view is substituted in the place of the anthropocentric, we are freed from humanism, localism and parochialism. This sort of vision of history enlarges our mental horizons and suffuses history with meaning. According to this advice of Nārada, Vyāsa in his new book (*Bhāgavata*) depicts the cycle of creations and dissolutions of the universes as God's work.

One may be tempted to ask, is there not an end to this process, is not God's purpose realized at any time? This again is an anthropomorphic question. God has nothing to realize. He has no ends. He is eternal and most good. He is eternally happy, self-complete. He has no unrealized purposes. He is *āpta-kāma*. For him no aim, no purpose. Then why does he indulge in this process of creation and dissolution of the world? Cosmic process (*viśvavyāpāra*) is the Lord's sport. As the *Bhāgavata* puts it, 'He of fruitful sport creates, sustains and

devours this universe'. '*Sa vā idam viśvam amoghalīlah sṛjati avati.*' There cannot be any reason for God's actions, he is the reason of all causes. Cosmic process is his sport (*Līlā*). He eternally enjoys the bliss, the sweetness and the splendour that are intrinsically present within himself. History is the *ātma-rati* (self-enjoyment), *ātma-āsvādana* (self-tasting) of God. This self-enjoyment of the Lord goes on for ever. The world is the manifestation in space-time of the Lord's timeless sport. God manifests himself in countless names and forms and is enjoying himself. Yet he is not exhausted in these names and forms (*nāmarūpa*). He transcends them. . . .

There can be no progress in the universe. The world being beginningless and endless and there being no impartial standard by which to judge, the notion of progress is inapplicable to the world. You cannot speak of progress with reference to the planetary systems or the innumerable species of life. The ancient Greeks and Hindus, who conceived the Universes as endlessly rotating between the phases of origination and destruction, were correct. But this cyclic movement is not without purpose or meaning. It has a purpose and a meaning, though it has absolutely no reference to man. Does not all this look very irrational? There is only one answer to this. Reason need not be as we conceive it. 'Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.' It is not for the Turgots and the Condorcets to unravel what this purpose is.

The notion of progress is then applicable to humanity only. But here too, in what sense? If there is progress, it surely must consist in men's not remaining as they are. Looking at the panorama of human history can we with justice say that the nature of man has evolved in any significant way since the Palaeolithic days? The doctrine of original sin contains a sound truth. In spite of Nietzsches and Aurobindos, who dreamt of Supermen, and Bergsons and Ouspenskys, who conceived of a better type of men, no change in human nature can be expected for the better or the worse, as long as human life lasts on earth. . . .

If morality cannot serve as the criterion of progress, can happiness serve? No, for since the remotest times the quantum of happiness, that is one's lot, has not increased or decreased



in any way. Whether born five thousand years ago or today everyone will pass through childhood, youth and old age, will see sun-rise and sun-set. No particular age either in the past or in the future can be looked upon as the golden age. The millennium will never dawn. Those who are expecting the world-Utopia are looking at men and things *au couleur de rose*.

So we can speak of progress in one and only one sense. We have made tremendous advance over our fore-fathers in technology. By leaps and bounds has our knowledge increased and we are able to have many technical devices, which were previously undreamt. But this advancement in knowledge and technics has neither increased nor decreased our happiness, nor has it bettered or worsened our moral nature. If man wishes to obtain happiness he must turn inward. The Kingdom of heaven—the realm of bliss, peace and plenty—is within. It is eternally present.

## 8

## HISTORY: A SCIENTIFIC HUMANIST'S VIEW

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU<sup>1</sup>1. *History, Progressive and Purposive*

A study of history should teach us how the world has slowly but surely progressed, how the first simple animals gave place to more complicated and advanced animals, how last of all came the master animal—Man, and how by force of his intellect he triumphed over the others. Man's growth from barbarism to civilization is supposed to be the theme of history. In some of my letters I have tried to show you how the idea of co-operation or working together has grown, and how our ideal should be to work together for the common good. But sometimes, looking at great stretches of history, it is difficult to believe that this ideal has made much progress or that we are very much civilized or advanced. There is enough of want of

<sup>1</sup> Jawaharlal Nehru, *Glimpses of World History*, pp. 6, 59, 60, 98; *Discovery of India*, pp. 33, 13; *Glimpses*, pp. 562-4; *Discovery*, pp. 14-15; *Glimpses*, pp. 897, 901, 902.



co-operation today, of one country or people selfishly attacking or oppressing another, of one man exploiting another. If after millions of years of progress we are still so backward and imperfect, how much longer will it take us to learn to behave as sensible and reasonable persons?—But even this should not make us lose heart. The world is a big place and the rise and fall of any country for a while may not make much difference to the world at large.

### 2. *History, Story of Man's Struggle*

Real history should deal, not with a few individuals here and there, but with the people who make up a nation, who work and by their labour produce the necessities and luxuries of life, and who in a thousand different ways act and react on each other. Such a history of man would really be a fascinating story. It would be the story of man's struggle through the ages against Nature and the elements, against wild beasts and the jungle and, last and most difficult of all, against some of his own kind who have tried to keep him down and to exploit him for their own benefit. It is the story of man's struggle for a living.

### 3. *Nationalism and Internationalism, Forces in World History*

In the old days people often thought in terms of universal sovereigns and World-States. Long afterwards came nationalism and a new kind of imperialism, and between the two they have played sufficient havoc in this world. Again there is talk today of a World-State, not a great empire, or a universal sovereign, but a kind of World-Republic which would prevent the exploitation of one nation or people or class by another. Whether or not anything like this will take place in the near future, it is difficult to say. But the world is in a bad way, and there seems to be no other way to get rid of its illness.

Recent events all over the world have demonstrated that the notion that nationalism was fading away before the impact of internationalism and proletarian movements had little truth. It is still one of the most powerful urges that move a people, and round it cluster sentiments and traditions and a sense of common living and common purpose. While the intellectual strata of the middle-classes were gradually moving away from

nationalism, or so they thought, labour and proletarian movements, deliberately based on internationalism, were drifting towards nationalism. The coming of war swept everybody everywhere into the net of nationalism. This remarkable resurgence of nationalism, or rather a re-discovery of it and a new realization of its vital significance, has raised new problems and altered the form and shape of old problems. . . . The nationalist ideal is deep and strong; it is not a thing of the past with no future significance. But other ideals, more based on the ineluctable facts of today, have arisen, the international ideal and the proletarian ideal, and there must be some kind of fusion between these various ideals if we are to have a world equilibrium and a lessening of conflict. The abiding appeal of nationalism to the spirit of man has to be recognized and provided for, but its sway limited to a narrower sphere.

#### 4. *Marxist Interpretation makes History Meaningful*

A study of Marx and Lenin produced a powerful effect on my mind and helped me to see history and current affairs in a new light. The long chain of history and of social development appeared to have some meaning, some sequence, and the future lost some of its obscurity. . . . It [Marxism] is a way of interpreting history and politics and economics and human life and human desires. It is a theory as well as a call to action. . . . It is an attempt at reducing human history, past, present and future, to a rigid logical system with something of the inevitability of fate or kismet about it. Whether life is so very logical, after all, and so dependent on hard-and-fast rules and systems does not seem very obvious, and many have doubted this.

Marx's general analysis of social development<sup>1</sup> seems to have been remarkably correct, and yet many developments took place later which did not fit in with his outlook for the immediate future. . . . So while I accepted the fundamentals of the socialist theory, I did not trouble myself about its numerous inner controversies. . . . Life is too complicated and, as far

<sup>1</sup> By this Nehru seems to indicate the two points: methods to produce the means of living influence ideas, institutions and structure of society; changes in the former produce changes in the latter. History is the history of class struggles, the dominant class being the one which controls the means of production; new methods of production give rise to new classes which control them. (*Glimpses of World History*, pp. 563-4.)—Ed.



as we can understand it in our present state of knowledge, too illogical for it to be confined within the four corners of a fixed doctrine.

### 5. *Scientific Approach*

The real problems for me remain problems of individual and social life, of harmonious living, of a proper balancing of an individual's inner and outer life, of an adjustment of the relations between individuals and between groups, of a continuous becoming something better and higher, of social development, of the ceaseless adventure of man. In the solution of these problems the way of observation and precise knowledge and deliberate reasoning, according to the method of science, must be followed.

This [scientific] spirit has been at the back of Western civilization for the past 150 years or so. As its influence has grown, the ideas based on unreason and magic and superstition have been pushed aside, and methods and processes alien to those of science have been opposed. This does not mean that the spirit of science has triumphed completely over unreason and magic and superstition. Far from it. But it has undoubtedly advanced a long way, and the nineteenth century saw many of its resounding victories.

The scientific method seems to be the only correct way of approaching a question. Science today has lost all the arrogance and self-sufficiency which it had during the nineteenth century. It is proud of its achievements, and yet it is humble before the vast and ever-widening ocean of knowledge that still lies unexplored. . . . Still science does answer more and more questions, and helps us to understand life, and thus enables us, if we will but take advantage of it, to live a better life, directed to a purpose worth having. It illumines the dark corners of life and makes us face reality, instead of the vague confusion of unreason.



## HISTORICAL METHODOLOGY

R. G. BHANDARKAR<sup>1</sup>

Yaska tells us that a science should not be taught or communicated to a faultfinding or prejudiced man and the mood to be observed in studying a subject is, according to the *Bhagavadgītā*, that of Śraddhā, i.e. a disposition to receive whatever strikes as reasonable or an attitude of open-mindedness.

A critical inquirer is one who does not accept an account of an occurrence just as it is presented to him, whether orally or in writing. He subjects it to certain tests calculated to prove its truth or otherwise. He takes care, for instance, to ascertain whether the person giving the account was an eyewitness to the occurrence, and if so, whether he was an unprejudiced and at the same time an intelligent observer. If his information is based on other sources, the critic endeavours to ascertain the credibility or otherwise of those sources. When it is a thing or a verified occurrence that he has to deal with, he does not satisfy himself with that view of its nature and relations that appears plausible at first sight. He seeks for extraneous assistance to enable himself to arrive at a correct view. One of the most efficacious means employed by him is comparison of like things or occurrences. This comparison enables him to separate the accidents of the thing or occurrence from its essential nature, and sometimes to arrive at a law which includes the thing or occurrence as a particular case and explains it. Though comparison may thus be considered one of the means of a critical examination, still its own proper results are so important that it deserves to be considered an independent method of inquiry. The history of a thing, i.e. a comparison of the various forms it presents at different well-ascertained periods, is also of the greatest use for the determination of its real nature. Often, when no written history is available, the inquirer determines the historical or chronological relations between the several

<sup>1</sup> R. G. Bhandarkar, *Collected Works*, Vol. I, pp. 323, 362-5, 372-8, 386-7, 390.

forms of a thing by referring them to an obvious standard, and arrives at some important conclusions based on such relations.

The comparative and historical methods correspond to the inductive method used in the physical and experimental sciences. In those branches of knowledge in which you cannot from the nature of the case make experiments, you have recourse to comparison and historical observation. . . . This critical and comparative method is necessary not only for increasing our knowledge of the world and of historical man, but also for arriving at correct views of things in ordinary practical life. I must use criticism and comparison if I wish to have a true knowledge of the character of any man, public or private, or to understand any individual action of his correctly. Criticism and comparison are necessary for the politician, the legislator, the lawyer, the merchant, and, last but not least, the newspaper writer if he is to rise above the level of scurrilous journalism.

Criticism and comparison are of use not only in enabling us to arrive at a knowledge of what is true, but also of what is good and rational. A man born in a certain country with certain social and religious customs and institutions, and in a certain range of ideas, thinks those customs, institutions, and that range of ideas, to be perfectly good and rational, and sees nothing objectionable in them, unless he is a man of genius. When, however, he comes to know of other customs, other institutions, and other ideas, and compares them with those to which he has become accustomed, he is able to find out any evil that there may be in the latter, and to see what is better and more rational. The comparison of the jurisprudence of different countries is calculated to afford valuable hints to the legislator for the improvement of the laws of his own country. Similarly, the critical observation and comparison of the social institutions of other countries and even of other religions will afford guidance to the social and religious reformer. Critical comparison is also of use in giving us juster notions of the beautiful.

Before admitting the narrative contained in an ancient work to be historical, one ought to ask oneself whether the object of the author was to please and instruct the reader and



excite the feeling of wonder, or to record events as they occurred. If the former, the narrative cannot be accepted as historical, but legendary. Our obvious and almost axiomatic notions of ordinary probability should also be brought to bear on the question. If a king, for instance, in such a narrative is represented to have reigned a thousand, or even two or three hundred years, one ought to understand that the author wants to excite the feeling of wonder and admiration in his reader, and was in all likelihood under the influence of that feeling himself.

It is, therefore, the duty of the critical scholar to collect manuscripts from different parts of the country and collate them, with a view to arrive at a correct text. In the performance of this task, which often is very laborious, he ought to be guided by definite principles. He should, in choosing or rejecting a certain reading or a certain passage, see whether it gives good sense, whether it agrees with the context, whether it is in keeping with the author's general way of thinking, whether it is found in the oldest manuscripts, whether the idea or mode of expression was current in the author's time, whether it involves redundancy or tautology, and so on.

Now as to the mode of interpretation of the texts so settled. The first rule is that a word as occurring in a book must be interpreted in the sense which usage has given to it. Etymology may serve as a guide; but it ought never to be set above usage. Consequently, no word should be understood in an etymological sense only. Often times it is difficult to find the correct etymology, and a man has recourse to one that is fanciful. An interpretation of a book based on such fanciful etymologies must be incorrect. Then again, the literature of a country is divisible into periods, and the usage of one period differs from that of another. A word, therefore, occurring in a certain book, should be understood in the sense which it has in the usage of the period in which the book was written. A better way still is to interpret it in the sense in which the author himself uses it in other parts of his work.

Having disposed of books and other written documents, I will now endeavour to estimate the value of traditions. If we accept traditions as we find them, we shall often be deceived . . . traditions are not to be entirely rejected. An endeavour should be made to ascertain their antiquity, as their credibility must



be considered to be proportionate to it; and if they are in themselves probable and stand all critical tests, they may be provisionally accepted . . . . But the chief use of a tradition is to confirm, corroborate and strengthen other evidence; and it should not be put in the place of such evidence.

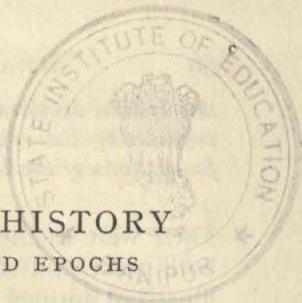
I will now proceed to give instances of our method from philology and point out the errors due to superficial analogies. People seem to think that mere external similarity between a word in one language and another in another language is enough to enable us to decide that the two are one and the same word.—Unless you resort to comparison and historic observation and discover laws which explain the particular case before you, your etymology must be empiric.

In connection with this matter of insufficient or superficial analogies, I may mention that those who are engaged in the studies I have been speaking about are peculiarly open to their influence, especially when they lead to or support a theory which is striking. Thus, the *Rāmāyaṇa* is supposed by some to represent the struggles between the Brāhmanas of India and the Buddhists of Ceylon; that the Rākṣasas that disturb the rites of the Brāhmanas in the Daṇḍakāraṇya are Buddhists; that the red clothes worn by the priests at the magic of Indrajit are the brown garments of Buddhist mendicants, etc. Again, Sitā's ravishment is the same incident as the ravishment of Helen, and Śiva's bow which Rama bent is the bow of Ulysses. Therefore, Valmiki must have been influenced by Homeric ideas, and the poem written after the Hindus came in contact with the Greeks. . . . Similarly resemblances have been traced between the ideas expressed in the *Bhagavadgītā* and those expressed in the New Testament, and a Christian influence detected in that work. But a good many of these resemblances are more apparent than real, the whole tone and manner of the Gītā are different from those of the New Testament, and most of the notions suspected to be borrowed from the Bible are found expressed in the Upaniṣads and such older works, as has been shown by the late Dr Muir. Scholars seem sometimes, when they have to advocate a theory, to forget our common humanity to which a great deal that is common in our notions must be attributed.

On the other hand, when the evidence is irrefragable it is unscholarlike to deny foreign influence. For instance, the

Indian astronomical works written during the first five centuries contain several Greek terms. The names of the twelve signs of the Zodiac are translations of the Greek names; and the original Greek names even are given by Varāharmihira.

Thus, then, the great lesson we have to learn is that if we wish to know and understand the truth about a point, whether in science or practical life, we should seek analogies, find out, if we can, the history, and criticize, not foolishly and ignorantly as we often do, but according to well defined and rational principles.



## B

# A PANORAMA OF INDIAN HISTORY

SOME VIGNETTES, EPISODES AND EPOCHS

## I

### DEMOCRACY IN ANCIENT INDIA

B. C. LAW AND BENI PRASAD<sup>1</sup>

*(India has a great tradition of democracy. From pre-Buddhistic times for centuries there flourished in India a number of non-monarchical states. Some of them were tribal republics, others oligarchies or aristocracies, and one was ruled by two hereditary kings and a council of elders with supreme authority. Yet others were large republican states and confederacies. From Greek, Sanskrit and Pali sources, we learn that the conception and practice of democracy in ancient India were in no way inferior to that of Athens. Like ancient Greek democracy, ancient Indian democracy also, more or less, possessed these five characteristics: 'The equality of all rights, the rejection of arbitrary power, the appointment to offices by lot, the responsibility of officials and common deliberation and decision in the popular assembly'. (Herodotus, III, 82.) Many of these Indian republican states were established by dissolving monarchies when they became despotic, and in turn they were abolished and incorporated in the Maurya, Kushan and Gupta empires. Kṛṣṇa, Mahāvīra and the Buddha belonged to autonomous societies which were more or less democratic. Kṛṣṇa belonged to the Vṛṣṇi clan of the Yādavas of Mathura, Mahāvīra to the Jñātrika clan of Kundagrāma near Vaiśālī, and the Buddha to the Sākya clan of Kapilavastu. Like the Teutons against the universal Roman empire, the ancient Indian non-monarchical states fought against the absolutistic and expansive tendencies of the Mauryan and the Gupta states as well as foreign invaders. If, as Montesquieu said, the germs of constitutional monarchy are to be found in the forests of Germany, those of representative democracy can be found in ancient Indian republics. The recollection and conscious appropriation of*

<sup>1</sup> B. C. Law and Beni Prasad in *The History and Culture of the Indian People—the Age of Imperial Unity*, edited by R. C. Majumdar, pp. 3, 330-4.



*this Indian democratic tradition can animate present day Indians by engendering the republican spirit in them and thus strengthen the foundations of the Indian republic.—Editor.)*

There were in the sixth century BC a large number of states, both great and small, and many of these were not ruled by kings but formed petty republics or oligarchies. This political condition of North India . . . thus resembled that of Greece in the same period, though naturally the size of the kingdoms as well as of some of the non-monarchical states in India was much bigger. (B. C. Law)

So far as the period under review is concerned, there is abundant evidence that monarchy was not the sole form of government. . . . It is to be noted that the majority of Indian states with which Alexander came into contact were non-monarchical.—The non-monarchical states are also referred to in Indian literature such as the *Mahābhārata* and Kautilya's *Arthasāstra*. But by far the most interesting account of them is preserved in the Buddhist literature. . . . This indicates that the non-monarchical constitution, referred to as *gaṇa*, was a general feature of the political system of the country.

The Buddhist literature mentions a large number of republican clans, but does not give any details regarding their constitution save in the case of the Śākyas of Kapilavastu and the Vajjian Confederation, of which the Lichchhavis of Vaiśālī were the most prominent. These were ruled by a supreme assembly, consisting of both old and young members, which frequently met and fully discussed all important questions concerning the state. There was a head of the state, probably elected for a term of years, who functioned as the chief executive officer. There are good grounds to believe that the Mallas and Lichchhavis, and probably also others, had an executive council of nine members. The head of the state and the members of the assembly were called Rājā, which bore here the same sense as Consul and Archon. The house where the Assembly met was called Santhāgāra.

The Lichchhavi state was divided into a number of small administrative units, the heads of which composed the supreme assembly at the centre. This has a strong resemblance to the

Cleisthenian constitution of Athens, and perhaps in both cases the locality was substituted for the clan as the administrative unit, which meant in effect the transition from the principle of kinship to that of locality or residence.

There is no doubt that the supreme assembly of the Lichchhavis consisted of a large number, and as such may be regarded as a popular body. Some scholars are, however, of opinion that these numbers were recruited from the nobility. In any case the assembly fully discussed all important questions, and its conduct of proceedings and the management of affairs of state drew the highest encomium from Gautama Buddha. Indeed he was so deeply impressed by the Lichchhavi and other republican states that he adopted a democratic constitution for his own church (*Sangha*).

We can formulate the following general principles in regard to the republican constitution: (1) Definite rules were laid down regarding the method of moving resolutions in the Assembly. Generally the proposal was repeated thrice, and if no objections were raised it was taken as passed. In case of objection, the sense of the assembly was determined by the votes of the majority. Definite rules were laid down for the counting of votes and there was a special officer for the purpose. Voting by ballot was in use. (2) Complicated questions were referred to committees. (3) Definite rules were laid down about quorum, votes of absentees, subsequent legalisation of acts done by an illegally constituted assembly, etc.

Buddhaghosa's commentary has preserved a unique account of the administration of justice among the Lichchhavis and other clans forming the confederacy of the Vajjis. According to it there was a regular chain of eight courts presided over by eight officers from *Vinichchayamahāmatta* at the bottom to the Rāja at the top. An accused person could be discharged by any one of them, if found not guilty, but otherwise he had to be brought before the next tribunal; he could thus be punished only if he was found guilty by all the successive eight tribunals. . . . It upholds a democratic view of the liberty of a citizen which has probably no parallel in the history of the world.

There is a remarkable passage in the old Buddhist canonical text *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta* in which Buddha gives eloquent expression to his views about the constitution of the Vajjis.



'So long, Ānanda,' said he, 'as the Vajjians hold these full and frequent public assemblies, meet together in concord and carry out their undertakings in concord . . . and act in accordance with the ancient institutions of the Vajjians . . . so long as they honour and esteem and revere and support the Vajjian elders and hold it a point of duty to hearken to their words . . . so long may the Vajjians be expected not to decline but to prosper.'

[*The Mahābhārata*] was in favour of the democratic forms of government, and was anxious to preserve them from the dangers to which they were naturally exposed. The chief of these were disunion and dissension and lack of secrecy. Hence they recommend forbearance and toleration as the guiding principles of members, and the formation of a small cabinet of select leaders. 'The gaṇa leaders', we are told, 'should be respected, as the worldly affairs depend to a great extent upon them. The spy and the secrecy of counsel should be left to the chiefs, for it is not fit that the entire body of the gaṇa should hear those secret matters.' In conclusion it is said that 'it is the internal danger that is chiefly to be guarded against; the external danger is not of much importance. The gaṇas are torn asunder by the enemies . . . by creating dissensions and offering bribes; so it is said that unity is the chief refuge of the gaṇas'.

The long passage in the *Sānti Parvan* from which the above extracts are quoted shows a thorough comprehension of the essential features of a democratic constitution. The existence of the democratic states in India for more than a thousand years (600 BC to AD 400) gave rise to a political philosophy of which only a faint echo has been preserved in this remarkable passage in the Great Epic. (Beni Prasad)



## AŚOKA, 'THE BELOVED OF GODS'

RADHAKUMUD MOOKERJI<sup>1</sup>

Aśoka<sup>2</sup> worked for the moral uplift of his people by preaching in his Edicts the fundamental principles and practices of Dharma or moral life. He insisted on the family as the basis of morality. His view was that religion, like charity, should begin at home in the cultivation of proper relations in the domestic sphere with father and mother, elders, teachers, and seniors in status or age, to whom strict obedience is enjoined.—There should also be a considerate treatment of all those with whom a householder comes into contact in his social life. . . . Character, conduct and behaviour counted more in this view of religion than rituals or ceremonies. Aśoka defines the practice of morality and right conduct as the true ceremonial (R.E. XII).—When the basis of religion was thus laid in the establishment of proper relations between individuals in the domestic circle, it was extended beyond the home and family to communities. Aśoka was anxious for the concord of communities, and harmony of creeds. His Twelfth Rock Edict is a passionate appeal not only for the toleration of all religious sects but also for developing a spirit of reverence for them. He sought the solution of the communal problems of his time by insisting on the following measures and practices: (1) promotion of what constitutes the essence of all religions as their common ground or root (*mūla*); (2) cultivation of this sense of unity of all religions by the practice of *vachaguti* or restraint of criticism of other religions and sects; (3) the coming together (*samavāya*) of exponents of different religions in religious assemblies; (4) learning the texts of other religions so as to become *bahuśṛta* or proficient in the scriptures of different religions. As was usual with Aśoka, he himself set an example to this by honouring all

<sup>1</sup> Radhakumud Mookerji in *The History and Culture of the Indian People, The Age of Imperial Unity*, edited by R. C. Majumdar, pp. 82–3.

<sup>2</sup> The Maurya Empire was founded by Candragupta (324–300 B.C.). His dynasty ended in about 187 B.C. His grandson Aśoka (c. 273–36 B.C.) was one of the greatest rulers known to history. In its heyday the Maurya Empire was the mightiest in the world.—Editor.

sects and making gifts to them. His dedication of Barābar hill caves to the Ājivikas is a noble monument to his catholic spirit of religious toleration far in advance of his age.

Above all, Aśoka stood for the religion of *Ahimsā* or non-violence (to men and animals) which he preaches in many of his Edicts. He insisted on the recognition of the sanctity of all life. He set the example himself. The unrestricted slaughter of animals for the royal table was first limited to one deer and two peacocks, and was later totally abolished. But the principle of non-violence was not merely limited to food and private life. It was extended to the wider sphere of politics and international relations. He purified his national policy by proclaiming war as an unmitigated and absolute evil. He now dedicated himself not to the extension of territory by conquest and force but to the extension of Dharma and conversion of people to a moral life by love. Thus, instead of organizing military expeditions against other countries, he was busy organizing peace missions under his *Dūtas* for purposes of humanitarian work in those foreign countries (R.E. XIII). Silenced was the war-drum (*bherī-ghoṣa*) which was replaced by the *Dharmaghoṣa*: there was no longer any summons to war or call to the colours but only a call to moral life. (R.E. IV).

One important consequence of his non-violent pacific politics was that, instead of completing his grandfather's scheme of conquering the whole of India and establishing his authority over it as the sole sovereign or *eka-rāṭ*, he on principle left unsubdued the smaller and weaker peoples and states of India, including the primitive aboriginal tribes and foresters (*āṭavya*), and established all states, great and small, on a footing of equal sovereignty. Of some of these he makes honourable mention in his inscriptions, as we have seen, as his neighbours whose welfare he seeks. There were also left patches of autonomous states in the interior of his empire.



## GAUTAMĪPUTRA, 'LORD OF THE THREE OCEANS'

D. C. SIRKAR<sup>1</sup> AND K. A. NILAKANTA SASTRI<sup>2</sup>

(Covering at its zenith almost the whole of South India and spreading far into the North too, the Śātavāhana Empire, pace Sirkar, lasted for over four centuries from about 220 BC. Though the majority of the Śātavāhanas were Hindus, their age was a glorious epoch of Buddhism in the South.—The Editor.)

In the first century BC two southern powers became predominant in trans-Vindhyan India. These were the Śātavāhanas<sup>1</sup> of the Upper Deccan and the Chedis of Kalinga. . . . The Śātavāhana power endured for nearly three centuries. [The Purāṇas, epigraphic records and Buddhist books testify they were Andhras.]

Gautamīputra Śātakarṇi (of the Śātavāhana dynasty) is said to have been the destroyer of the Scythians, Indo-Greeks and Parthians (*śakayavana-pahlavaniśūdana*) and the establisher of the fame of the family of Śātavāhana (*śātavāhana-kula-yaśah-pratiṣṭhāpanakara*). His outstanding achievement was the extirpation of the Kshaharata dynasty. . . . The direct rule of this king therefore seems to have extended over the whole land from the Kṛṣṇā in the south to Mālwā and Kathiawār in the north and from Berār in the east to the Konkan in the west. But Gautamīputra apparently claimed a sort of suzerainty over the whole of trans-Vindhyan India, as he is described as the lord of the Vindhya (the central and eastern Vindhyas as well as the Sātpura), Rkṣavat (portion of the Vindhyhan range to the south of (Mālwā), Pāriyātra (western Vindhyas and the Ārāvalli), Sahya (Western Ghats to the north of the Nilgiri hills), Malaya (Travancore hills), Mahendra (Eastern Ghats) and other mountain ranges encircling the peninsula of South India. The idea may have originated from a conventional claim of *divgiyaya* indicated by Gautamīputra's epithet *tri-samudra-*

<sup>1</sup> D. C. Sirkar in *The History and Culture of the Indian People—The Age of Imperial Unity*, edited by R. C. Majumdar, pp. 191-2, 200-3.

<sup>2</sup> K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *A History of South India*, p. 3.



*toyapīta-vāhana*, i.e. one whose chargers drank the waters of the three seas in the east, west and south, viz. the Bay of Bengal, the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean.—His reign may be assigned roughly to the period c. AD 106–30.—He is described as a handsome person with a charming and radiant face, with beautiful gait and with muscular and long arms. As regards his temperament, Gautamīputra is credited with readiness to impart fearlessness to all, obedience towards his mother and reluctance to hurt even an offending enemy. He was the refuge of the virtuous, the asylum of fortune and the fountain of good manners. As a king he was not only a unique controller obeyed by the circle of all kings, but he evinced interest in the weal of his subjects and sympathized with their woes, always levied taxes in conformity with justice, helped the higher as well as the lower castes and stopped the social evil called *varna sankara* (intermingling of the four social orders).—Dharma was vindicated and re-established wherever the Andhras held sway.<sup>1</sup> (D. C. Sirkar)

The Śātavāhanas were described as 'lords of the three oceans' and promoted overseas colonization and trade. Under them Buddhist art attained the superb forms of beauty and elegance preserved to this day in the cave-temples of western India and the survivals from the stūpas of Amarāvati, Goli, Nāgārjunikonda and other places in the Kṛṣṇā valley; and the tradition was continued long after the Śātavāhanas by their successors both in the eastern and western Deccan. The latter half of Śātavāhana rule in the Deccan coincides with the age of the literature of the Sangam in Tamil and of active trade between India and the Roman empire.<sup>2</sup> (K. A. N. Sastri)

<sup>1</sup> Last sentence by K. M. Munshi in *The History and Culture of the Indian People—The Age of Imperial Unity*, p. XIX.

<sup>2</sup> The Śātavāhanas situated in the middle of India achieved the synthesis of Āryan and Dravidian civilizations and contributed to India's cultural unity.—Ed.

SAMUDRAGUPTA, 'THE MIGHTY AND  
RIGHTEOUS UNIFIER OF INDIA'R. C. MAJUMDAR<sup>1</sup>

*(In the fourth century A.D., the Guptas, till then ruling a portion of Bengal, became an important power by their matrimonial alliance with the Lichchhavis, and gradually extended their sway over large parts of North India. At its peak the Gupta Empire covered not only all North India, but also Orissa and the strip of eastern coastal territory up to Chingleput near Madras. The Gupta emperors were respected and obeyed by most of the other kings in India. Samudragupta (c. 335-76) and his son Candragupta II were the greatest rulers of this dynasty which flourished from 320 to 550 A.D. Inscriptional evidence points out that Samudragupta's ideal was to unify the whole of India by force (bāhuvīryaprasara dharanī-bandhasya), and to rule the country bound by the moral law (dharmaprācīrabandhah). It has become the custom to refer to the Gupta Age as the Golden or the Classical Age of India. The epics, Purāṇas and many of the śāstras were completed and finalized in this age. Kālidāsa, Varāhamihira the astronomer, and Vasubandhu the great Buddhist philosopher, lived in that period.—Editor.)*

The vast empire of Samudragupta must have been the result of numerous military campaigns extending over many years. . . . When we recall the large number of states acknowledging his authority it is impossible not to feel profound admiration for his military genius. The total extermination of the nine states in Northern India demanded uncommon daring and military skill. His southern campaign, over long distances, and through comparatively unknown and inhospitable regions far from his base, must have called forth powers of leadership and organization of the highest order. His march along the coastal regions makes it likely that the land-operations were aided by the navy, the possession of which is implied in his dominion over islands in the sea. He is known to have performed the *Aśva-medha* sacrifice. No historical Indian ruler, either before or after him, had greater justification for performing this time-

<sup>1</sup> R. C. Majumdar, in *The History and Culture of the Indian People—The Classical Age*, pp. 13-16.



honoured ceremony and unique method of asserting universal supremacy.—Brilliant both as general and statesman, Samudragupta also possessed many qualities of head and heart better suited to a life of peaceful pursuits. According to the Allahabad inscription he was not only a great patron of learning but was himself a great poet and a musician. (The Buddhist philosopher Vasubandhu was his minister.) . . . The same record emphasizes his charity and kindness. His munificence, we are told, removed the eternal discord between good poetry and plenty and he restored the kings fallen from their high estate to wealth and fortune.

Samudragupta was devoted to religious observances and the sacred scriptures. He was a follower of the orthodox Brāhmanical cult, and gave many hundreds of thousands of cows by way of gifts to Brāhmaṇas. . . . His reign marked a distinct revival of the old glory and influence of the Brāhmanical religion which had suffered decline. . . . There can be no doubt that Samudragupta was a striking, almost unique, personality; and he ushered in a new age in the history of India. It is in the fitness of things that he assumed the title Vikramāṅka, evidently in imitation of the king Vikramāditya of legendary fame. We have a remarkable memorial of his life and reign in the rich variety of gold coins issued by him. They not only indicate the power, wealth and grandeur of his empire but also give us some idea of his physical appearance and insight into his remarkable personality. Three types of coins represent him in a military garb. In one he stands fully dressed, holding a bow and an arrow, and on the margin runs the legend 'having conquered the earth, the invincible one wins heaven by good deeds.' Another depicts him as holding a battle-axe with the appropriate legend 'wielding the axe of Kṛtānta (the god of death), the unconquered conqueror of unconquered kings is victorious'. In the third the king, wearing turban and waist-cloth, is trampling on a tiger which falls backwards as he shoots it with the bow in his right hand, the left hand pulling the string back behind the ear. The legend refers to the king as 'having the prowess of a tiger'. These figures of the king are apparently drawn from real life, as also that of the fourth type referred to above in which the king, wearing waist-cloth, plays on a *viṇā*. The legend on this type of coins simply gives



his name without any reference to his martial exploits. The fifth type of coins commemorates the *Aśvamedha* sacrifice. It shows, on the obverse, a spirited horse standing before a sacrificial post, and on the reverse, the figure of the queen-empress. The legend on this type reads: 'The king of kings, who performed the *Aśvamedha* sacrifice, having, protected the earth, wins heaven'. These five types of coins thus symbolize both the martial and peaceful pursuits of the king.

Samudragupta, as far as we can judge of him from the materials at our disposal, was the visible embodiment of the physical and intellectual vigour of the coming age which was largely his own creation. His coins and inscriptions hold up before our mind's eye a king of robust and powerful build, whose physical strength and prowess, matched by his cultural attainments, heralded a new era in Āryāvarta (N. India). After five centuries of political disintegration and foreign domination, she again reached the high watermark of moral, intellectual and material progress. It was the Golden Age which inspired succeeding generations of Indians and became alike their ideal and despair.

## 5

## DEMOCRACY WITHIN AN EMPIRE

K. A. NILAKANTA SASTRI<sup>1</sup>

*(Among the great powers that ruled South India from the close of the sixth century AD, the Pallavas, the Pāndyas, the Colas and the Cālukyas were the most important. They established mighty kingdoms and empires, and great contributions to culture were made in that age. The Cālukyas of Bādāmi and their successors, the Rāṣtrakūṭas of Mānyakhetra, were responsible for many rock-cut and structural temples, the most notable of them being the Kailāsa temple of Ellora; and additions were made to Ajanta paintings in that period. In the Pāndya-Pallava period (AD 550-850), Bhakti movements in Śaivism and Vaiṣnavism were spread by the Nāyanārs and the Ālvārs. Śankara (788-820 AD) resuscitated Vedānta. The great temples of Mahābalipuram and Kāncīpuram were built then. 850-1200 AD was the age of the Colas and the Cālukyas of Kalyāṇi.)*

<sup>1</sup> K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *A History of South India*, pp. 5-6.

*Contributions to political science and law, Rāmānuja (1037-1137 A D), and the great temples, hospitals and schools built in those times attest to the greatness of that epoch. The first extract below gives a brief account of the glory of Colas, an expansive power which conquered Ceylon and Indonesia and ruled half of the former for over half a century. Yet the Cola empire internally was a democratic structure. Its villages were autonomous self-governing units administered by elected representatives. The Cola empire was divided into six or eight mandalams (provinces), each constituted by a number of koṭṭams (districts), each one of these again consisting of several kuṛṭams, administrative units made up of one or more villages. The second extract below describes this system.*

*Similar village and town institutions with judicial and executive powers, remarkable for their strength, stability and efficiency, seem to have flourished throughout India from immemorial times. Self-government and the ballot are thus autochthonous to India. Buddhist Jātakas, Kautilya's Arthaśāstra, the Smṛtis and Gupta records testify to the local autonomy of towns and villages in classical India. The Cola inscriptions and books like Śukra's Nītisāra (thirteenth century?) confirm that villages governing themselves through elected councils were a reality in medieval India. Warring kingdoms and dynastic changes, as well as foreign invasions and occupations, could not destroy this system of local self-government which served as the abiding foundation of national culture. Muslim rule brought about some changes in the government machinery at the centre and provincial head-quarters, but the village communities continued in their full municipal vigour. Adapting the Aristotelian definition, we may say the Indian state was an association of castes and village communities in a complete and self-sufficing life. (In Muslim India Muslims just became another caste, the ruling one.) The state as a union of autonomous towns and villages was a great and unique political contribution of India. Early British administrators (e.g. Sir Charles Metcalfe) noted that it was such a union of self-governing communities, each a little republic in itself, which preserved the people of India and enabled them to enjoy a great deal of freedom and happiness, in spite of all the vicissitudes they passed through. In the turmoil that followed the dissolution of the Mughal empire these institutions began to decay and the British by introducing colonial economy, a new type of land tenure (the landlord system) and an excessively centralized administration, disrupted the foundations of this decentralized democracy. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century the British began to revive local self-government somewhat on the lines of their own tradition, but kept it under their official tutelage, which they began to gradually relax from*



*1921 onwards. Independent India has been trying to resuscitate the institution of independent villages, give it a statutory basis and integrate it with parliamentary democracy based on adult franchise and the party system both at the centre and in the states.—Editor.)*

The rise of the imperial Colas . . . may be dated from the middle of the ninth century AD. . . . The Cola power . . . swept on to its meridian in the first part of the eleventh century under Rājarāja I and his even greater son Rājendra I.<sup>1</sup> At a time when Northern India was divided into a number of weak and warring states, some of which began to stagger under repeated Islamic inroads, these two great monarchs gave political unity to the whole of Southern India for the first time and established it as a respected sea-power controlling the highways of the Indian Ocean and effectively regulating the affairs of the empire of Śrī Vijaya<sup>2</sup> by invasion and diplomacy. They perfected a highly organized administrative system of central control and fostered the autonomy of village assemblies as none had done before; the father constructed the Great Temple of Tanjore, the purest and most magnificent gem of South Indian architecture; and the son created its replica in the wilds of the Trichinopoly district and called up a new city to surround it. The name of the city, *Gangaikondaśōlapuram*—‘the town of the Cola who took the Ganges’ was an advertisement of the new power of South India to the rest of the country. This was the silver age of the religious revival which had begun under the Pallavas; a fresh commentary on the *Rig-Veda* was composed by Venkata Mādhava who lived in a village on the banks of the Kāveri in the reign of Parāntaka I; the Tamil hymns, Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava, of the last epoch, were gathered together and grouped into canonical books, a form which they have retained to this day; the glorious conception of the form of the Dancing Lord Natarāja found embodiment in many monumental bronze images which, alike for the technical skill they imply and the artistic perfection they exhibit, have few rivals in the history of the world’s art.

<sup>1</sup> Some accounts give AD 985 as the date of Rājarāja’s accession, and 1012–44 as the regnal years of Rājendra.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> This became the dominant power in Malaysia by the eighth century.—Ed.



## THE IDYLL OF AUTONOMOUS KUṚṚAM REPUBLICS

S. KRISHNASWAMI AIYANGAR<sup>1</sup>

The government [of a Kuṛṛam] was in the hands of a powerful assembly, or the *Mahāsabhā*, composed of all the male inhabitants of the village, even including the young men and the old men, who were generally excluded from holding administrative offices of the locality. They had the complete control of the administration and did everything that had to be done by way of administration; in other words administrative work in the village had to be done under their direction, and, on the instructions laid down by them generally.—For purposes of administration, this Sabha either from among themselves, or otherwise, created a certain number of smaller bodies. These bodies were in charge of various of the departments of administration in general, and conducted them as a subordinate administrative authority under the direction of this general assembly.

It is in respect of the appointment of committees in particular that rules are specifically laid down. . . . The rules were promulgated not in the name of the king, but on the authority of the assembly for the election every year of committees. . . . [For example] it is laid down for Uttaramallūr that the town be divided into thirty wards, as in fact it was, and, as a general principle, those that lived in each ward were to assemble and choose men for these committees by putting the names of worthy individuals on tickets which were collected together and put into a pot, from which were drawn tickets for one member for each ward.—In this manner, one from each ward was chosen making up the total of the elected thirty. From out of the thirty, the committees were constituted.

The following were entitled to have their names put upon the pot-tickets: (1) They must be of an age above 35 and below 70; (2) Those who were owners of a quarter *veli* of tax paying land, a *veli* being equal to  $6\frac{2}{3}$  acres; (3) Those who had a house built upon their own site; (4) In case, however, of those not having this landed property, those that were possessed of learning of a certain degree were entitled to vote.

<sup>1</sup> S. K. Aiyangar, *Evolution of Administrative Institutions in South India*, pp. 131-3, 190, 194, 191, 192, 193, 196, 203, 251, 367-8.

Among those possessing the foregoing qualifications it is only the following that were entitled to election: (1) Only those who were well conversant with business and who conducted themselves generally according to sacred rules of conduct (*asaramudaiyra*); (2) Only those were entitled who had acquired their wealth by honest means, *arthasausam*; whose minds were pure *anna sausam*; and who had not already served on any of these committees during the three years preceding. The following classes of people were disqualified: (1) Those who had been members of one of these committees and had not submitted their accounts. Their relations (of the first degree) were also debarred from holding places on these committees. (2) Then follows a number of other disqualifications which spring from ill conduct on the part of the individual.

The accounts of the village were to be kept by arbitrators. They must be men who had earned their wealth by honest means. One that was writing accounts during one year was not to be appointed to the next year unless he had rendered accounts satisfactorily for the previous year. . . . The accountant who wrote the accounts for the year ought to submit the accounts himself, and other accountants ought not to be brought to close his accounts.—The general assembly of the village was apparently the body whose function it was to administer justice. It is equally clear that even here the general assembly exercised its function through a committee, a committee of justice.

The rulers of Tamil India show themselves at their best in the completeness with which they carried the devolution of power, which amounted to the people being left to administer their own affairs in the best interests of the communities occupying the localities concerned.

Civil administration as such in all departments seems to have been entirely in the hands of the people subject no doubt to the control and regulation both of the subordinate governments of the provinces and the headquarters government of the monarch, and his council. Except to the degree of interference, when interference was actually called for by misfeasance or maladministration, the rulers seem to have been content to allow the people to carry on the administration as they thought best. . . . A few matters regulating interstate relations, matters



affecting the army and the development of the military resources of the state, matters relating to the maintenance of peace in the interior in regard to that part of it which fell outside the bounds of capacity of the local authorities, and the exercise of a general healthy control over the administration in all its details, these and these alone seem to have been the departments reserved for the central governments.

## 6

## THE DELHI SULTANATE AND ALAUDDIN'S TOTAL STATE

M. HABIB<sup>1</sup> AND I. H. QURESHI<sup>2</sup>

(Mahmud of Ghazni, a Turk, raided a part of North India several times between A D 999-1026, and scattered Hindus like atoms of dust, as Alberuni said. But after he raided Somnath, on his way back, he was utterly defeated in Rajasthan and 'fled in dismay'. Many Turks, Afghans and Mughals were taken as captives and absorbed into Rājput clans and castes like that of Kolis, Khantas, etc. (Tarikh-i-Sorath). However Mahmud succeeded in annexing Punjab and Sindh. In 1192 Shahabuddin Ghori, an Afghan, then ruling Ghazni, succeeded in capturing the throne of Delhi. Iltutmish (1211-36), a Turk, is regarded as the founder of the Delhi Sultanate. This however did not mean the subjugation of the whole of India, which never happened. It took another 150 years or so for Muslim rule to spread to the south; but parts of the South, parts of Orissa, Assam, the forest regions of Madhya Pradesh, Chota Nagpur Plateau, Rajasthan and Maharashtra continued to be more or less independent of Delhi till the British established themselves in India. The Khalji dynasty captured the Delhi Sultanate and ruled from A D 1290 to 1320. It is not certain whether the Khaljis were Afghans or Turks. Alauddin (1296-1316) was the greatest ruler of this dynasty. He inaugurated the imperial phase of the Delhi Sultanate, married a Hindu (as did his son later), introduced secularism and statism. He was altogether a unique man. His attempts to befriend Jaina ascetics, his intention to found a new religion, his patronage of

<sup>1</sup> Mohammad Habib, Introduction to Elliot and Dowson's *History of India*, Vol. II, pp. 36-8, 43, 45, 52, 54, 59, 51; 72-3, 78-82.

<sup>2</sup> I. H. Qureshi, *The Administration of the Sultanate of Delhi*, pp. 211n, 212-13.



*learning, his marriages with Rājput women, his placing 'the good of the State' above Islam and his desire to achieve the unification of the whole of India under one crown were most remarkable. These may have set precedents for Akbar. His political philosophy may perhaps be summed up thus: the ruler is the state, the interests of both are identical; the state is supreme. His ideal state was a 'total' state.*

*Most historians do not accept the following thesis of a Marxist Muslim historian that the Ghorian conquest and the Khalji government brought about a profound and desirable revolution in India. There is no evidence for Prof. Qureshi's claim (in the second extract) that Hindus were better off under Muslim rule than before. As the land tenure system did not change and most of the cultivators continued to be Hindus, life in the villages remained the same. Conversions to Islam were mostly from the ranks of artisans and craftsmen, and in East Bengal from the peasantry. Commerce and trade were carried on by the Hindus more or less as before. The lower officials were Hindus, but they were excluded from high offices. The Hindus lost political power and dignity; they were distrusted and religious disabilities and discriminatory taxation were imposed on them. Still, as K. M. Panikkar wrote, life did not become too hard for them. But under rulers like Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin (1420-70) of Kashmir, Sultan Alaaddin Husain Shah (1493-1518) of Bengal, Akbar the Great and Ibrahim Adil Shah (1579-1626) of Bijapur, life for the Hindus was on the whole free and good, as it was for the Muslims under almost all the Vijayanagara kings and some of the Mahārāṣṭra rulers.—Editor.)*

### *The Delhi Sultanate and Mughal Empire are Indian*

Because the English government was a foreign government supported by foreign troops, it has been imagined that the Delhi Sultanate and the Mughal Empire were administrations of the same type; and it is conveniently forgotten that the Mussalman of India has no 'home government' outside India and none of that superiority in machine—industry and armaments—which led inevitably to the establishment of British rule in India. One must be very ignorant of the original material of Indian history, political and non-political, to imagine that the government of medieval India was either foreign or military. Secondly, . . . the Delhi Sultanate was no more 'Muslim' than the British Empire has been 'Christian'. . . . The higher Muslim consciousness throughout the middle ages repudiated the claim of the state to be anything but the organization of the dominant class for its own benefit.

*The Ghorian 'Urban Revolution'*

The two antithetical propositions—that true religion prevailed against the false for it is the nature of religious truth to prevail or that the barbarians conquered the civilized because it is the nature of the barbarians to conquer—can be pitted against each other till the end of time without any useful result. . . . But seen from a higher level, the whole process becomes clear. What is called the Muslim, but is really the Ghorian conquest of India, meant two things—first, the substitution of the Ghorian Turks for the 'Thakurs' as the governing class; and secondly, the enfranchisement of the Indian city-workers, accompanied by a considerable landslide among them towards the new faith.

This transition was made possible because Indian society had become weak and helpless owing to a series of contradictions. Two of these contradictions lay on the surface for all to see: (a) the contradiction between a hereditary caste of warriors and the current methods of war, and (b) the contradiction between the standard of the Indian producer's work and his legal and social status. (c) A third contradiction is to be found in the continuation of a hereditary caste with a monopoly of culture.—The higher classes appropriated the cities and towns exclusively to themselves while the workers lived in unprotected villages and in settlements outside the city-walls.—There was a further handicap—the rigidity of the caste-system with its insistence on *chūt* or physical contamination.—[The Ghorian conquest] was not a conquest, properly so called. This was a turn-over of public opinion—a sudden turn-over, no doubt, but still one that was long overdue. The Indian capacity for fighting was there, but it had simply not been called into play.<sup>1</sup>—People will not fight for their chains.—The so-called Ghorian conquest of India was really a revolution of Indian city labour led by Ghorian Turks.<sup>2</sup>—Under the new regime the army became a function of the new working-class.—[So] in spite of the

<sup>1</sup> Habib thinks this is the explanation for the ease with which Ghorian Turks conquered the whole of North India within twelve years. The working people outside the city walls did not care to fight. The Hindu nobles agreed to collect land-revenue for the invaders, while the middle classes had no capacity to fight.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> City workers and professional groups accepted Islam, suggests Habib, as they were concerned with mundane affairs and their social position.—Ed.



continued efforts of three generations, the Mongols were unable to accomplish their great enterprise of conquering India. The post-revolutionary Indians were in no mood to be conquered.—And this new-found strength was entirely due to the Urban Revolution of northern India.—

### *The 'Tremendous Khalji Adventure'*

This brings us to one of the deepest contradictions of the thirteenth century—the contradiction between town and country. The towns, on the whole, were well governed—; and the population—obeyed the administration and the law.—Outside the cities . . . the organized anarchy of the rural intermediaries reigned supreme.—It was left to Alauddin Khalji to work out the Revolution in the rural areas.—[He was] the greatest ruler that the Mussalmans of India have produced.—He was hundred per cent Indian.—The sole object of his policy was 'service to the people of God'.—With reference to the rural problems of India, Alauddin laid down one basic principle—'The burden of the strong was not to be thrown on the weak'.—The great Khalji emperor achieved two things—first, he relieved the low-caste cultivator from the oppression of the high-caste rural intermediary; this was a revolutionary step, novel and purely Indian. Secondly, he insured the safety of trade-routes and the regular exchange of commodities between town and country. This was a novelty for India.—He was concerned exclusively with a patent, all-India injustice, the domination of the intermediary over the cultivator; and he liquidated the intermediaries as effectively as Chairman Mao Tse-tung and the Communist Party have liquidated feudalism in China.—The cultivator gained what the intermediary lost. There was a greater incentive to production and an undeniable increase in prosperity throughout the land.

One thing was clear after the tremendous Khalji adventure. India would never again become the land of caste-privileges it had been for some centuries past. Whatever shape the future may assume, Alauddin had assured one thing for all time. In all spheres of life, except marriage and personal laws, India would become what the *Manusmṛiti* so intensely hated—'a confusion of castes'. (Mohammad Habib)

*Muslim Rule in India*

The Hindu population was better off under the Muslims than under Hindu tributaries or independent rulers.—Nor was the Hindu despised socially.—The Hindu was not branded with any social stigma; it was Hinduism which protected itself beneath the strong armour of exclusiveness. (I. H. Qureshi)

## 7

## KṚṢṆADEVA RĀYA, 'THE MOST FEARED AND PERFECT KING'

K. A. NILAKANTA SASTRI<sup>1</sup>

*(The Sultan of Delhi conquered Kampili in AD 1327, and later appointed as its governors Harihara and Bukka, two new converts to Islam. From 1325 inspired by Śaivism, a number of Hindu chiefs revolted against Muslim rule and succeeded in re-establishing Hindu principalities and kingdoms. Under the influence of this popular movement to restore Hinduism and inspired by Vidyāraṇya, a great Vedāntin, Harihara and Bukka gave up Islam, returned into the Hindu fold, declared their independence and established in 1336 the state of Vijayanagar, which in due course developed into an empire. The Kings of Vijayanagar ruled as the agents of Virupākṣa (Śiva), for whom a temple was built on the banks of the Tungabhadra. The Vijayanagar empire endured for more than three centuries. A Muslim traveller Abdur-Razzak spoke of the capital city, Vijayanagar, 'such that eye has not seen nor ear heard of', while an Italian visitor, Nicolo Conti, wrote 'it was as large as Rome and very beautiful', and thought it 'the best-provided city in the world'. Kṛṣṇadeva Rāya (accession 1509, death 1529-30) was the greatest of its rulers. A Portuguese traveller, Paes, described him as 'the most feared and perfect King', 'a great ruler and a man of justice'. Though the Vijayanagar state was founded to preserve Hinduism, and was fighting throughout its existence the Deccan Muslim kingdoms, all its citizens enjoyed complete religious liberty. A personal observer, Duarte Barbosa noted, 'Great equity and justice are observed by all'. Jews, Christians, Muslims and Hindus, he wrote, lived according to their creeds, 'without suffering any annoyance and without inquiry'. The Vijayanagar kings Deva*

<sup>1</sup> K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *A History of South India*, pp. 267-8, 273-4, 295-7, 9-10.



*Rāya II (d. 1446) and Rāma Rāya (d. 1565) placed the Koran before them in their audience hall, so that their Muslim soldiers could reconcile themselves to making obeisance to them. Rāma Rāya allowed Muslims to build mosques and slaughter cows. Other kings made endowments to Muslim Dargas. Harihara II's minister was a Jaina; Deva Rāya II had a Christian Divan and built a Jaina temple and a mosque, while Venkata II (A D 1586-1614), the last great Vijayanagar emperor patronized the Jesuits, allowing them to establish churches and endowed their missions and colleges, and organized debates between them and the Hindus. Thus in South India he and his predecessors promoted religious tolerance and were trying to build a multi-religious state, as did Zai-nul-Abidin (1420-70) in Kashmir and Akbar the Great (1556-1605) in North India.—Editor.)*

The reign of Kṛṣṇadeva Rāya was 'the period of Vijayanagar's greatest success, when its armies were everywhere victorious, and the city was most prosperous'.—Pre-eminent as a warrior, Kṛṣṇadeva Rāya was equally great as statesman, administrator, and patron of the arts. The grandeur of his court excited the warm admiration of many foreign visitors and description of the great wealth of Vijayanagar, its festivals, its military strength and its heroic king make eloquent reading. All South India was under Kṛṣṇadeva Rāya's sway. . . . The empire, although under his direct rule, was itself divided into a number of governorships under generals, each of whom enjoyed practical independence so long as he maintained a certain quota of horse, foot and elephants in constant readiness for action and paid his annual contribution to the central treasury. For such a system to work efficiently, the monarch had to command the universal respect of his subjects and exhibit great energy tact and vigilance in the performance of his public duties. Kṛṣṇadeva proved himself more than equal to this task, and there was no confusion or disorder anywhere in the realm during his reign. He was a scholar and poet. . . . 'King Kṛṣṇa Rāya was in no way less famous for his religious zeal and catholicity. He respected all sects of the Hindu religion alike, though his personal leanings were in favour of Vaiṣṇavism. Kṛṣṇa Rāya's kindness to the fallen enemy, his acts of mercy and charity towards\* the residents of captured cities, his great military prowess which endeared him alike to his feudatory chiefs and to his subjects, the royal reception and kindness that he

invariably bestowed upon foreign embassies, his imposing personal appearance, his genial outlook and polite conversation which distinguished a pure and dignified life, his love for literature and for religion, and his solicitude for the welfare of his people, and, above all, the almost fabulous wealth that he conferred as endowments on temples and Brāhmins, mark him out indeed as the greatest of the South Indian monarchs.'

The basic nature of the historic role of Vijayanagar was to preserve South India as the last refuge of the traditional culture and institutions of the country. The great commentary on the Vedas composed by a syndicate of scholars with Sāyaṇa at their head, and the impressive additions made to the structure of almost all important temples in the country by the rulers of Vijayanagar, form the most typical monuments of the work, of the great Hindu empire.—Vijayanagar was perhaps the nearest approach to a war-state ever made by a Hindu kingdom; and its political organization was dominated by its military needs. The emperor maintained a large standing army consisting of an elephant corps, cavalry and infantry.

In addition, military fiefs studded the whole length and breadth of the empire, each under a nāyak or military leader authorized to collect revenue and to administer a specified area provided he maintained an agreed number of elephants, horses, and troops ever ready to join the imperial forces in war. Nuniz counted more than two hundred such nāyaks. There were regular military schools where men were trained in archery, swordsmanship, and so on, and prepared for enlistment in the army; the artillery, however, seems generally to have been manned by foreigners. . . . Fortresses played a large part in the defence organization, and the arts of siege were well known and extensively practised. There must have been a navy of some sort for the Rāyas had the command of several ports and of parts of Ceylon; but we have no definite information on its strength or organization.

But it was a long military vigil; the polity had to be organized on a warlike footing, and there was no room for weak or incompetent monarchs on the throne; whenever the hereditary claimants were found wanting, they were displaced by the ablest among their lieutenants. The empire is best looked upon as a military confederacy of many chieftains co-operating under



the leadership of the biggest among them. Even so, the exigencies of the struggle compelled the rulers of Vijayanagar to resort to the employment of foreigners and even Muslims in the artillery and cavalry sections of their armies to make them adequate for the defence of their country and religion.

## 8

## RĀJPŪT CHIVALRY AND 'HINDUPATHA'

N. K. DUTT<sup>1</sup> AND A. C. BANERJEE<sup>2</sup>

*(Late in the fourteenth century, Timur invaded India and smashed the Delhi Sultanate. Rāṇā Sāṅgā, King of Chittore, Mewar (c. 1509-29), who belonged to the clan of Guhila Rājput̃s who established themselves as a dynasty in the seventh century, secured the integrity of his state against the inroads of the Muslim kingdoms of Malwa, Delhi and Gujarat, stabilized its finances, augmented its military power, and wanted to establish himself as the ruler of Hindu India (Hindupatha) on the breaking of the Delhi Sultanate. To destroy the Sultanate, he first encouraged Babur to attack Delhi, and Babur in 1526 defeated the Sultan of Delhi. Then rallying Rājput̃ chiefs, and Afghan nobles who wished to revive the Delhi Sultanate, Rāṇā Sāṅgā fought Babur at Khanua in 1527. Sāṅgā's defeat blasted Rājput̃ hope to re-establish Hindu rule in Delhi, and enabled the Turco-Mongol, Babur, a descendant of Timur, to found the Mughal Empire in India.—Editor.)*

Rājput̃—What romance, nobility, and glamour are not woven round the name Rājput̃ which represents the quintessence of chivalry in the history of medieval India! Their wonderful bravery, their heroic sacrifices, their regard for honour and troth have set a stamp upon the Rājput̃ warriors which distinguished them as a class from the rest of the folk in India for about a millennium after the death of Harṣavardhana. In the nobility of spirit and reckless self-sacrifice the heroic knights of medieval Europe can hardly surpass the warriors of Rājasthān who peer out from the pages of Tod's *Annals*. No doubt they had their vices too. Their narrow-mindedness, their clan-spirit,

<sup>1</sup> N. K. Dutt, Foreword to R. S. Satyasray's *Studies in Rajput History*, Vol. I, pp. i-ii.

<sup>2</sup> A. C. Banerjee, *Rajput Studies*, pp. 56, 85-8, 91-6.

their internecine quarrels, their inability to make a stable combination, their haughtiness, their recklessness of consequences have earned them the condemnation of modern writers. But were not these faults present among King Arthur's knights of Britain, the Visigothic knights of Spain, the Frankish knights of Gaul, the Lombard knights of Italy, the Saxon knights of Germany, and even with that pick of warriors, the Norman knights of medieval Europe? Similar conditions in Europe and India gave rise to similar problems and similar classes. The fall of the Roman Empire, the invasions of the Hūṇas, the wanderings of the Teutonic hordes, and the coming of Islam produced factors in Europe not unlike those which were witnessed in India after the fall of the Gupta Empire. If India was overwhelmed by Muhammadan conquerors and Europe was saved, the blame need not go to the Rājput fighters alone. The Pratihāras of Rajputana can claim equal credit with the Frankish dynasty of Charles Martel in stemming the first tide of Arab victories, though unfortunately the name of the Indian Tours is forgotten. But where was the unifying influence of Papacy in India; where was the crusading spirit in Indian religions to meet the combative faith of the Turkish invaders; where were the unending streams of men, high and low, monks and laymen flinging themselves recklessly upon the enemy for the cause of the Indian Church and holy places at a time when there was no national consciousness to bring about cohesion in the ranks of the quarrelsome knights? To make matters worse, in India the reaction of the Hūṇa and Muhammadan invasions made the fissiparous tendencies of the caste system more rigid and more confusing than before. The difference in the fates of medieval Europe and India is not due to any intrinsic superiority of the European knighthood to the Rājput. (N. K. Dutt)

Rājā Sāṅgā of Mewar played such an important part as the champion of Hinduism against Islam that the local history of Mewar during his reign may be considered as a very significant episode in the general history of India. His career as an antagonist of Babur naturally occupies a prominent place in all works dealing with the history of India in the sixteenth century.

On the eve of his fatal contest with Babur for the supremacy



of Northern India, Rāṇā Sāṅgā occupied a really unique position. We read in Babur's Memoirs that 'not one of all the exalted sovereigns of this wide realm, such as the Sultan of Delhi, the Sultan of Gujarat and the Sultan of Mandu, could cope with this evil-dispositioned one, without the help of other pagans; one and all they cajoled him and temporized with him'. This estimate of the Rāṇā's power and influence is not exaggerated.—Within Rājputānā Sāṅgā's ascendancy was complete.—Such a ruler was eminently fit for restoring Hindu supremacy in Northern India. The moment was appropriate; the Sultanate of Delhi was tottering to its fall. Nor did Sāṅgā lack in the patience and determination which are essential for success in such a dazzling but difficult enterprise. Since his accession he had been deliberately trying to strengthen his position by weakening his formidable neighbours, the Muslim rulers of Malwa and Gujarat [whom he defeated often]. He had succeeded in a trial of strength with Ibrahim Lodi [sultan of Delhi] himself [and twice defeated him]. He had invited Babur to occupy Delhi, so that he himself might easily 'move on Agra'. After the battle of Pānīpat Sāṅgā felt that the moment, for which he had been waiting so long, had come at last.—Sāṅgā had promised to 'move on Agra' if Babur came to Delhi from Kabul, but he gave no sign of moving even after the capture of Delhi and Agra by the Mughals. We may assume that Sāṅgā did not intend to help Babur in occupying the throne left vacant by Ibrahim Lodi. His real aim was to seize that throne for himself. That aim could not be realized without driving Babur out of India. So Sāṅgā began to advance towards Babur's headquarters and at the same time strengthened himself by securing the alliance of the discontented Afghan chiefs.

After numerous skirmishes the final battle took place at Khanua, a dependency of Biyana, on March 17, 1527. The Rājpuṭs were defeated.—It is necessary to analyse the causes which led to Sāṅgā's defeat in the battle of Khanua. Tod gives two reasons—the treachery of Silhadi and Sāṅgā's inactivity before the final battle.—Sarda says that the battle was lost by the Rājpuṭs because 'an arrow . . . struck with such force on the forehead' of the Mahārāṇa' that he lost his consciousness and had to be removed from the battlefield.

Sāṅgā's weakness really sprang from different reasons. Babur

clearly says that he was the leader of a 'rabble-rout'. His supremacy over Rājputānā wounded the clan sentiment of the average Rājput. The Rāthors, the Chauhāns and the Kachchawahas could not whole-heartedly accept the hegemony of a chief who belonged to a different clan.—Sāngā was trying to impose on the Rājputs a new type of unity which went against the traditional politico-social organization of the race. Nor could the 'Hindupatha' have expected wholehearted loyalty and assistance from his new-found Afghan allies. Everything separated them—religion, tradition, ultimate object [for while Sāngā wanted to establish Hindu ascendancy in Northern India, the Afghans aimed at placing a Lodi prince on the throne of Delhi]; they were united only by a common emergency—the necessity of driving Babur out of India. Such an unnatural combination could hardly be effective against a group of men whose future in an unknown country depended upon cohesion and desperate courage.—Another factor—purely military—contributed to Babur's success. There is no doubt that, as a general leading his men to a definite goal through definite means, Babur was far more able and far-sighted than his rival. Apart from this, these two great men were fighting on different principles of warfare. While Babur relied on artillery and mobility, Sāngā depended on cavalry. Tod says that Babur's artillery made dreadful havoc in the close ranks of the Rājput cavalry. Babur's experience of war outside India enabled him to strike a decisive blow against an antiquated system which prevailed in conservative India. (A. C. Banerjee)

## 9

## THE HINDU-MUSLIM ENCOUNTER

*(Muslims have been living in India for many centuries now, and various parts of this country were under continuous Muslim rule for several centuries. It is generally admitted that Hindu and Islamic cultures have enormously influenced each other and many even say that these 'vast and strongly developed' civilizations have not only met, but 'mingled' together, in spite of the 'radical dissimilarity', 'contrasts' and 'wide divergences between them'. (Sir John Marshall) No one denies that throughout Indian history there have been some Muslim*



and Hindu kings, saints, scientists, scholars, poets and artists, who have studied, understood and admired each others' ways of living, polity, religion, philosophy, science, literature, arts and crafts and also appropriated what they considered to be the best elements in them. Such men have not only promoted mutual tolerance and understanding, but enabled mutual assimilation (not in essentials, some may say) of the two cultures among some sections at least, up to a point. There always have been many cases of warm friendship and even love among persons belonging to these religions. There was also no lack of those who thought that in essence Islam and Hinduism both taught the same great truth, and that the sincere Muslim and the sincere Hindu were knowingly or unknowingly practising the same thing. Even today among Muslims and Hindus all these types of men exist. Except when their frenzies were roused and organized against each other, in the towns and villages of India the common people belonging to both these religions lived together peacefully and co-operatively, sharing in each others' pleasures and sorrows, participating in each others' sports, ceremonies and festivities and adopting to some extent in daily life each others' manners, customs and language. In spite of all this, there is no unanimity that the mutual impact has produced an integral synthesis and a common culture. This needs further discussion.

The Hindu and Islamic interpretations of the meaning and end of life, it is contended, are 'unassimilable' by each other. (Peter Hardy) So, the argument continues, Hindu and Islamic cultures have co-existed—almost in apartheid. Like the earlier invaders of India, the Muslim invaders were not absorbed by Hindu society, but retained their identity. (For a different view see below.) According to Sir Jadunath Sarkar, though the Hindus were ready to absorb the Muslims, the 'fierce' monotheism of Islam and the 'extra-Indian direction' of Muslim feelings did not make this possible. Muslims, Sarkar wrote, considered the Hindus to be polytheists and consequently 'unclean'. So they could not mix together. 'Nothing has enabled them to bridge this gulf.' (India Through The Ages). Until Islam and Hinduism die and are reborn this would not happen, he thought. Sarkar's two points have some force because, firstly, important Indian Muslim political theorists like Ziauddin Barni (1285-1365?) and Shaikh Hamadani (after 1350) never admitted the equality of Hindus and Muslims; the former said the decree for Hindus was 'either death or Islam', while the latter thought that certain religious and civil disabilities and a poll tax ought to be imposed on them. (Akbar, Abul Fazl and such men thought otherwise, but they were atypical.) Secondly, 'extraterritorial sympathies are', said Muhammad Ali, 'part of the quintessence of Islam'. (Congress Presidential Address, 1923.) K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, however,

believes (so does I. H. Qureshi) it was because of Hindu social exclusiveness that 'the social gulf' between Hindus and Muslims was never bridged. (But he thinks there were mutual contacts in religion and philosophy.) (History of India, Part II, 1959, p. 75.) Sastri's point also has some force because from the eleventh century itself some orthodox Hindu thinkers attempted to preserve the integrity of Hindu society by making it exclusive to fortify it against Islamic influences and contacts, while they tried to consolidate it from within by making the caste rules very rigorous. They did this through interpretation of *smṛtis* and by writing new books on *Dharmaśāstra*. But for these men the spread of Islam in India would have been rapid and formidable. K. M. Panikkar declared that these two 'separately organized communities did not exert any "fundamental" influence on each other.' Hindus and Muslims, he says, constitute two 'parallel societies' each with a different religion, culture and a way of life of its own, without any communication and intermingling. (The Foundations of New India, pp. 56, 60. A Survey of Indian History, 1964, p. 135.) R. C. Majumdar appears to hold similar views. It is interesting to remember that in the tenth century Alberuni found that Hindus and Muslims differed in every respect, while in contemporary times men like Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, Sir Muhammad Iqbal, Rahmat Ali and Muhammad Ali Jinnah contended that 'the Hindus and Muslims belong to two different religious philosophies, social customs, literatures—(and) indeed to two different civilizations, which are based mainly on conflicting ideas and conceptions. . . . (They) derive their inspiration from different sources of history. They have different epics, different heroes, and different episodes. Very often the hero of one is a foe of the other.' (Jinnah's Presidential Address to the Muslim League, 1940.) This is one point of view. Yet even if it were accepted that not only the religions, but the philosophies, cultures, laws, and social customs of the Hindus and Indian Muslims are entirely different, it would not follow that they ought to have two separate states. The Indian Christians, Sikhs, and Parsis too differ in this way from one another and the Hindus; and the Todas, Mundas and Nagas differ in several respects from all these. One may even speak of differences among the cultures of Bengal, Panjab, Kerala and other regions. Within Islam itself these are Sunni-Shia differences, while among Hindus there are Śaivas, Vaiṣṇavas and others with different ideas and customs. The Brāhmanas, the non-Brāhmana upper castes and the Harijans too differ from each other in several respects. The Sunni-Qadiyani, the Hindu-Muslim, the Jewish-Christian, the Catholic-Protestant and the Confucian-Buddhist differences are not necessarily irreconcilable antagonisms. In a multi-religious democratic republic which is building up a free and



plural society, regional, cultural and religious differences cannot endanger the religious or civil liberties of anyone.

There have been, on the other hand, a number of distinguished scholars who have held that the Afghans as well as the Mughals were 'absorbed' by 'the Indian environment' and 'Indianized', and that in course of time they tried to function as Indians and that due to their impact the older inhabitants were influenced by Persian culture. In the case of Muslim Arabs and Hindus similar cultural interchanges occurred much earlier. In the medieval period, they say, there was a spontaneous movement towards a 'synthesis of thought and ways of living' resulting in a 'cultural amalgamation of Hindu and Muslim' and 'a mixed culture'. (Jawaharlal Nehru) (Others like Mohammad Habib too vouch for the Indianness of the Sultanate and the Mughal Empire.) Long association, the majority of Indian Muslims being converts from Hinduism and the rise of religious liberalism enabled the Hindus and Muslims 'to imbibe each others' thoughts and customs'. So there occurred an 'assimilation between the two cultures' in 'different aspects of life' (Kalikinkar Datta), and in spite of the Hindu caste system, Islamic religious exclusivity and the ruling Muslim class being of foreign origin, 'a highly intricate and sophisticated common culture' and 'a sense of oneness' developed. (Jawaharlal Nehru) When Babur came to India in the third decade of the sixteenth century he found that 'the Hindus and Muslims lived and thought so much alike' that he called it the Hindusthāni way. (Tarachand) Several factors furthered and strengthened this. There were efforts by some of the Sultans of Delhi (e.g. Alauddin, Muhammad Tughluq, Sikandar Lodi, Sher Shah Sur) in the direction of religious tolerance and the admission of Hindus to state services. (Mahmud of Ghazni himself had Hindu officers and soldiers in his service and Indian architecture and customs influenced his capital.) Some of these Sultans (e.g. Alauddin, Firuz Shah, Ghiasuddin Tughluq) had a few Jaina and Hindu ascetics, scholars or officers as personal friends and advisers. The really worthwhile contribution to a synthesis of cultures was, however, made not under the aegis of the Sultans of Delhi, but under the Sultans of Kashmir, Bengal, Gujarat, Jaunpur, Malwa, Bijapur and Golkonda. Zain-ul-Abidin of Kashmir (1420-70), Alauddin Husain Shah of Bengal (1493-1518), Mahmud Khalji of Malwa (1436-69), Ibrahim Adil Shah of Bijapur (1579-1626) and Ibrahim Qutb Shah of Golkonda (1550-1580) deserve special mention in this connection. From the Hindu side, some of the Vijayanagar emperors were promoting religious reconciliation within their state and admitting Christians, Jainas and Muslims to state service. The 'general atmosphere of cultural understanding and the process of the blending of Hindu and

Muslim cultures' (S. Abid Hussain) received great encouragement and direction from Akbar the Great (1556-1605), who sought to build a national state, develop a common culture, promote religious harmony and found an eclectic religion. His two successors, who ruled from 1605 to 1658, did not make any departure from his policy of building a national state and achieving religious reconciliation, though Shah Jahan tended on occasions to disturb the latter. The influence of Prince Dara Shikoh (1615-59), a deep student of the Upaniṣads and the Koran, who thought that they were in mutual conformity and that the Hindu and Islamic religious traditions should mingle together, cannot be underestimated. During this century of Mughal rule (1556-1658) the developing common culture received a great impetus. The many Sufi orders which were introduced into India during the Sultanate and Mughal rule, the teachings of men like Rāmānanda (early fifteenth century?), Kabīr (1440-1518), Nānak (1469-1538), Chaitanya (1485-1533), Nāmadeva (first half of the fifteenth century) and others, all of whom had both Hindu and Muslim followers, made it possible for both Hindu and Muslim cultures and mysticisms to reach out towards each other with productive empathy and give rise to syncretistic tendencies. They laid the ideological foundation on which rulers could base their policy of religious harmony. The revivalist movements of the Sunni orthodoxy and the Dharmaśāstra School, the rule of Aurangzib and the reaction this produced among the Hindus, prevented the consolidation of cultural synthesis. According to S. Abid Hussain, though Hindusthāni culture 'began to decay with the decline of the Mughal empire', 'until 1857 it was accepted as the common culture of India'. (Indian Culture). He thinks the impact of Western culture and Muslim and Hindu revivalist movements disrupted it. There is, however, some justification to think otherwise and maintain that just as the Aryan-Dravidian cultural synthesis was not destroyed but only transformed by the impacts of the Greeks, the Iranians, the Huns and others, the Hindu-Muslim cultural synthesis was also not destroyed but only transformed by the Western impact. (See below Section C, extracts 1 and 6.) It must be added that British imperialism (as admitted by Lady Minto, Ramsay MacDonald and others) played an important part in accentuating Hindu-Muslim differences and encouraging some Indian Muslims to ask for separate electorates in the first instance and a separate state finally. This resulted in the establishment of Pakistan.

The thesis of the first extract below is that in every sphere of spiritual, social, political and cultural life a fusion and synthesis of Hindu and Islamic modes of thought and behaviour took place and has become the permanent heritage of both Hindus and Indian Muslims. The second extract maintains that Hindus and Muslims could not develop a com-



*mon ethos and gives the reasons for it. On this basis its author argued that Muslims were 'entitled to full and free development' on the lines of their culture and tradition in their 'own Indian homelands', and that their final destiny was to have a state of their own within or outside the British empire. The author of the third extract (written in 1912) argued that an united Indian nationality would evolve only if the 'communal individuality of the Muslims' is accepted and their interests secured. By the thirties he came to hold that only separate electorates could safeguard the Muslims from 'Hindu domination'.—Editor.)*

### *The Hindusthāni Way*

HUMAYUN KABIR<sup>1</sup>

The impact of Islam on India was deep and profound. The contact between new and old modes of thought compelled acute and sensitive minds to think afresh about the eternal problem of the universe. Men's minds were freed from the tyranny of old traditional ways. New religions and philosophies appeared to mark the rapprochement between Hindu and Islamic modes of thought. Yet the assimilation and synthesis between the two systems was not complete, for the facts of physical distance and inaccessibility remained. The interchange of thought and culture between the capital and the country remained imperfect. The cities displayed the fusion of the two cultures.—The small, compact and on the whole homogeneous Muslim aristocracy gave the tone to civic culture. In the country it was otherwise. . . . Rural culture, in spite of large scale changes in religion, remained dominantly Hindu, for men changed their creed but not their way of life.

Most Hindus believe that whatever manifestations of civilization there were in India took shape in ancient days and hence civilization means in effect Hindu civilization. Mussalmans on their part suffer from misgivings and doubt, for if there is no record of human progress during the many centuries they have lived in India, Indian culture must necessarily be Hindu and alien to them. It is because the co-operative effort of Hindus and Muslims in the creation of Indian culture has not been properly estimated that Muslim and Hindu look at one another with suspicion, hatred and contempt. . . . Hindu culture was

<sup>1</sup> Humayun Kabir, *Our Heritage*, pp. 41-5.

remarkable for both volume and extent. Even if it had lost some of its primal energy by the time the Muslim appeared on the scene, it retained elements of permanent value for the human mind. It was inevitable that Muslims who came into contact with it should imbibe its spirit. . . . In the conflict on the plane of power politics the Muslims won, but on the plane of intellectual and spiritual endeavour, the victory was mutual and can be more properly described as intimate and far-reaching co-operation.

The real history of India in the Middle Ages is thus the record of attempts at synthesis and co-operation between Hindu and Muslim on a thousand planes. The names of Rāmānanda and Kabīr, of Nānak and Caitanya come readily to the mind. The growth of Vaiṣṇavism in Bengal and of the Bhakti cult in Mahārāṣṭra may be directly attributed to this fusion of religious cultures. It was not on the spiritual plane alone that there were attempts at co-operative activity. At first under the Pathans and later on a wider scale the Mughals, this is unmistakable in the evolution of customs and conduct, fashions and festivals, in the very preparation of food and social and household affairs. In the matter of dress, a new costume was evolved which marks a breakaway from Arab or Central Asian influence. This period also saw the growth of a new language which serves to this day as a medium of communication between Indians of different races and regions. The rich literatures in many of the Indian languages serve as reminders of the growth of culture in medieval India. In every sphere of social, political and cultural life, we find the same impulse of fusion and synthesis. In architecture and sculpture, music and painting, in social habits and popular beliefs, the fusion of the old and the new created new forms in which the contribution of the two are inextricably mixed. In a word the mentality of the Muslim and the Hindu was so fused in the various manifestations of Indian genius that anybody who prides today in the unadulterated purity of his Hindu culture or his Muslim heritage shows a lamentable lack of historical knowledge and insight. Even as early as the time of Babur the process of assimilation had gone so far that he could characterize it as a unique mode of life—a mode to which he gave the name of the *Hīndusthānī way*.

The worlds of philosophy and economics are at the first



sight almost totally unrelated. Yet in both these spheres we find unmistakable traces of co-operation between the Muslim and the Hindu. It is indeed difficult to say how much of the present world outlook of the Indian Hindu is derived from Vedas and the Upaniṣads and how much from the teachings of Islam. In exactly a similar manner, in belief and in behaviour, in habits and in social institutions, the Indian Muslim shows unmistakable traces of the influence of Hindu culture and outlook.

### *On Hindu-Muslim Co-operation*

MUHAMMAD IQBAL<sup>1</sup>

[The formation of a single moral consciousness which is called a nation] is quite possible, though it involves the long arduous process of practically remaking men and furnishing them with a fresh emotional equipment. It might have been a fact in India if the teaching of Kabīr and the Divine Faith of Akbar had seized the imagination of the masses of this country. Experience, however, shows that the various caste-units and religious units in India have shown no inclination to sink their respective individualities in a larger whole. Each group is intensely jealous of its collective existence.—The unity of an Indian nation, therefore, must be sought, not in the negation but in the mutual harmony and co-operation of the many.—If an effective principle of co-operation is discovered in India, it will bring peace and mutual goodwill to this ancient land.—Our attempts to discover such a principle of internal harmony have so far failed. Why have they failed? Perhaps we suspect each other's intentions and inwardly aim at dominating each other. Perhaps—we cannot afford to part with the monopolies which circumstances have placed in our hands.—Perhaps, we are unwilling to recognize that each group has a right to free development according to its own cultural traditions.

### *Contemporary Hindu-Muslim Separatism*

MUHAMMAD ALI<sup>2</sup>

[The Hindus thought that] the Muslims . . . viciously strayed

<sup>1</sup> Muhammad Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, pp. 34–6.

<sup>2</sup> Muhammad Ali, *Select Writings*, pp. 65–7.

into Bharat and demolished its political features and landmarks. Instead of accepting philosophically what could not be undone, they began to quarrel with history. This attitude speedily produced amongst the majority of the educated Hindus the unfortunate habit of ignoring the one great reality of the Indian situation—the existence of about 70 million Muslims.—Educated Hindus made it [Hinduism] a rallying symbol for political unity.—‘Nationality’ and ‘Patriotism’ began to be associated with Hinduism.—[The Hindu] refuses to give quarter to the Muslim unless the latter quietly shuffles off his individuality and becomes completely Hinduized.—[The Muslim] community lagged behind—by—declining, for a considerable time, to avail itself of the facilities for intellectual and moral progress.—It suddenly found itself face to face with a community vastly superior to it in number, in wealth, in education, in political organization and power.—The spectacle of a go-ahead Hinduism, dreaming of self-government—dazed the conservative Muslim.—He felt as if he was being treated as an alien, as a meddlesome freak, who had wantonly interfered with the course of Indian history.—He had come as a conqueror and had freely given to India the best that was in him. With the loss of empire he felt as if he were to lose his self-respect as well.—His religion and history had given him an individuality which he was very loth to lose. As a consequence he drew within his shell and nursed ideals of communal patriotism.

## IO

## AURANGZIB, ‘THE WORLD-CONQUEROR’

JADUNATH SARKAR<sup>1</sup> AND S. M. JAFFAR<sup>2</sup>

*(As indicated in the prefatory note to the previous extracts, by the middle of the seventeenth century Islam in India began to develop syncretistic tendencies and some of the Sufi sects appeared to favour pantheism. There were influential religious teachers who declared the equality of all religions and attracted disciples belonging to all religions. The heir-apparent to the imperial throne (Dara Shikoh) and his*

<sup>1</sup> Jadunath Sarkar, *History of Aurangzib*, Vol. I, p. XI; Vol. V, pp. 473-9, 494-5.

<sup>2</sup> S. M. Jaffar, *The Mughal Empire From Babar to Aurangzib*, pp. 296, 300, 304.



friends like Muhammad Said (or Sarmad), a Sufi ascetic, also had the same views. New conversions to Islam declined, but conversions of Muslims to other faiths (e.g. Sikhism) began to increase. Some of the Sultans in the Deccan were Shias, and in the Mughal court itself the Rājputs and Shias were powerful. In such a situation Abdul Haqq Dihlavi (1551-1642) and Shaikh Ahmad Sirhandi (1564-1624) did much to revive Sunni orthodoxy, affirming the transcendence of God and asserting that only Islam and Sharia were true and perfect. But there was no political authority which exclusively supported the Sunnis. Alarmed by the internal and external dangers to its faith and inspired by Dihlavi and Sirhandi, the Sunni orthodoxy began to look out for political support. In Aurangzib, Alamgir [world-conqueror] [1658-1707], who zealously practised it, it found a mighty champion. So, though he became an emperor by removing from his ambitious path his two elder brothers and a younger brother and by imprisoning his father, and waged incessant wars against the Muslim kingdoms in the Deccan and destroyed them, orthodox Muslims by and large considered him the ideal ruler. His policy towards Hindus was in accordance with the precepts of men like Shaikh Hamadani [see previous note]. As the defender of orthodoxy, who in turn was supported by it, he had to encourage conversions to Islam, discriminate against the Hindus and reimpose on them the poll tax which Akbar abolished. He did not allow Hindus to build new temples or rebuild old ones, though he might not have ordered demolition of those in use. His convictions and, more than this, reasons of state made him dependent on the Ulama and follow the Sharia scrupulously. But he also knew the importance of winning the confidence and loyalty of the Hindus by 'allowing them to live an honourable life and earn their livelihood without any check or hindrance'. There is evidence that he sometimes at least ordered that Hindus should not be given any trouble, for if they were not allowed to carry on unhindered their religious duties, he recognized that 'panic and widespread discontent' would spread, and might endanger Mughal rule. [Firman to Abdul Hasan, Governor of Banaras.] But it is possible that knowing his situation and goaded by the Ulama, his officers did not follow such instructions scrupulously. One of the achievements of this great ruler was the unification of India. No previous Indian empire, except perhaps that of Asoka, rivalled his in extent. It was principally due to this unification that in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the legitimacy of the Mughal emperor's supremacy was accepted by almost all. His other great achievement was the consolidation of the Sunni faith in India in spite of internal challenges and external threats. To him and to Shah Wali-Ullah [1703-62] Indian Sunni Islam owed its revival and vitality, and it was chiefly the latter, a great

*religious thinker, who helped to preserve Muslim religious solidarity even after the Mughal empire disintegrated.—Editor.)*

The history of Aurangzib is practically the history of India for sixty years. His own reign (1658–1707) covers the second half of the seventeenth century and stands forth as a most important epoch in the annals of our country. Under him the Mughal empire reached its greatest extent, and the largest single state ever known in India from the dawn of history to the rise of the British power was formed. From Ghazni to Chatgaon, from Kashmir to the Karnatak, the continent of India obeyed one sceptre; and beyond this region, in far-off Ladak and Malabar, the suzerainty of the same ruler was proclaimed from the pulpit. . . . The empire thus formed, while unprecedented in size, was also one political unit. Its parts were governed not by the mediation of sub-kings, but directly by the servants of the Crown. Herein Aurangzib's Indian empire was vaster than that of Aśoka, or Samudragupta or Harṣavardhana. No provincial governor had as yet set up his own rule and withheld revenue and obedience from the central power. There were rebellions here and there, but no other crowned head raised itself to defy the Emperor of Delhi even in any province.

To all outer seeming, Aurangzib had no moral defect which might account for the destruction of the empire and of public peace.—He was brave in an unusual degree. All the Timurids, till the days of his unworthy great-grandsons, had personal courage; but in him this virtue was combined with a coldness of temperament and a calculating spirit which we have been taught to believe as the special heritage of the races of Northern Europe.—In addition to possessing constitutional courage and coolness, he had early in life chosen the perils and labour of kingship as his vocation and prepared himself for this sovereign office by self-control. Unlike other sons of monarchs, Aurangzib was a widely-read and accurate scholar, and he kept up his love of books to his dying day. Even if we pass over the many copies of the Koran which he wrote with his own hand, as the mechanical industry of a zealot, we cannot forget that he loved to devote the scanty leisure of a very busy ruler to reading Arabic works on jurisprudence and theology, and hunted for



MSS. of rare old books like the *Nehayya*, the *Ahiya-ululum*, and the *Diwan-i-Saib* with the passion of an idle bibliophile. His extensive correspondence proves his mastery of Persian poetry and Arabic sacred literature, as he is ever ready with apt quotations for embellishing almost every one of his letters. In addition to Arabic and Persian, he could speak Turki and Hindi freely. To his initiative and patronage we owe the greatest digest of Muslim law made in India, which rightly bears his name—the *Fatawa-i-Alamgiri* and which simplified and defined Islamic justice in India ever after.

Besides book-learning, Aurangzib had from his boyhood cultivated control of speech and action, and tact in dealing with others; and even the dizzy eminence of the Peacock Throne and lordship over 'nine hundred thousand horsemen' did not intoxicate him into losing the curb over his tongue, temper and heart for a single day during an exceptionally long life. As a prince, his tact, sagacity and humility made the highest nobles of his father's Court his friends; and as Emperor he displayed the same qualities in a degree which would have been remarkable even in a subject. No wonder his contemporaries called him 'the darvish in the purple'.—His private life—dress, food and recreations—were all extremely simple, but well-ordered. He was absolutely free from vice and even from the more innocent pleasures of the idle rich. The number of his wives fell short even of Koranic allowance of four, and he was scrupulously faithful to wedded love. The only delicacies he relished—the reader will smile to hear—were the acid fruit corinda (*Carissa carandas*) and a sort of chewing gum called *Khardali*.—His industry in administration was marvellous. In addition to regularly holding daily Courts (sometimes twice a day) and Wednesday trials, he wrote orders on letters and petitions with his own hand and dictated the very language of official replies. Four volumes of these, relating only to his last four years, are still extant and testify to his prodigious working capacity.—Historians have observed that though he died in his 90th year, he retained to the last almost all his faculties unimpaired. His memory was wonderful: 'he never forgot a face he had once seen or a word that he had once heard'. All his physical powers retained their vigour to the end, if we except a slight deafness of the ear, which afflicted him in old

age, and a lameness of the right leg, which was due to his doctor's unskilful treatment of an accidental dislocation.

But all this long self-preparation and splendid vitality, in one sense proved his undoing, as they naturally begot in him a self-confidence and distrust of others, a passion for seeing everything carried to the highest perfection according to his own idea of it—which urged him to order and supervise every minute detail of administration and warfare personally. This excessive interference of the head of the state kept his viceroys and commanders and even 'the men on the spot' in far-off districts in perpetual tutelage; their sense of responsibility was destroyed, initiative and rapid adaptability to a changing environment could not be developed in them, and they tended to sink into lifeless puppets moved to action by the master pulling their strings from the capital. No surer means than this could have been devised for causing administrative degeneration in an extensive and diversified empire like India. High-spirited, talented and energetic officers found themselves checked, discouraged and driven to sullen inactivity. With the death of the older nobility, outspoken responsible advisers disappeared from his council, and Aurangzib in his latter years, like Napoleon I after the climax of Tilsit, could bear no contradiction, could hear no unpalatable truth, but surrounded himself with smooth-tongued sycophants and pompous echoes of his own voice. His ministers became no better than clerks passively registering his edicts.

Politically, therefore, Aurangzib with all his virtues was a complete failure. But the cause of the failure of his reign lay deeper than his personal character. Though it is not true that he alone caused the fall of the Mughal empire, yet he did nothing to avert it. . . . The Mughal empire did much for India in many ways. . . . But it failed to weld the people into a nation, or to create a strong and enduring state.

The detailed study of this long and strenuous reign of fifty years . . . drives one truth home into our minds. If India is ever to be the home of a nation able to keep peace within and guard the frontiers, develop the economic resources of the country and promote art and science, then both Hinduism and Islam must die and be born again. Each of these creeds must pass



through a rigorous vigil and penance, each must be purified and rejuvenated under the sway of reason and science.

But Aurangzib did not attempt such an ideal, even though his subjects formed a very composite population, even though the Indian world lay at his feet and he had no European rivals hungrily watching to destroy his kingdom. On the contrary, he deliberately undid the beginnings of such a national and rational policy which Akbar has set on foot.

History when rightly read is a justification of Providence, a revelation of a great purpose fulfilled in time. The failure of an ideal Muslim king like Aurangzib with all the advantages he possessed at his accession and his high moral character and training—is, therefore, the clearest proof the world can afford of the eternal truth that there cannot be a great or lasting empire without a great people, that no people can be great unless it learns to form a compact nation with equal rights and opportunities for all—a nation the component parts of which are homogeneous, agreeing in all essential points of life and thought, but freely tolerating individual differences in minor points and private life, recognizing individual liberty as the basis of communal liberty—a nation whose administration is solely bent upon promoting national, as opposed to provincial or sectarian interests—and a society which pursues knowledge without fear, without cessation, without bounds. It is only in that full light of goodness and truth that an Indian nationality can grow to the full height of its being. (Jadunath Sarkar)

The lot of the subjugated has never been happier than under the ruling races of Islam. . . . Alamgir was tolerant, and to a fairly high degree, but not so tolerant as Akbar and Dara who in order to achieve their ulterior political aims, concealed their religious identities and even subscribed to the religion of the ruled. . . . Only after he [Aurangzib] discovered that it was impossible to reconcile the Rājpuṭs to his rule that he refused to rely on them and rallied round him his own co-religionists, with whose help he succeeded in crushing his enemies and enforcing his authority as well as restoring law and order. (S. M. Jaffar)

## II

## SHIVAJI'S SPIRITUAL IDEAL

G. S. SARDESAI<sup>1</sup>

A hero's true greatness is perceived only when he is viewed from a distance in time. It is, therefore, a wonder how Shivaji's<sup>2</sup> character, policy and achievements were so correctly judged by one of his own ministers, Ramcandra Nilakanth.—I shall begin by giving here some extracts from this wonderfully penetrative analysis of Shivaji's character and aims:

'The epoch-maker Chhatrapati was at first a Muslim's dependent but he managed from the age of fifteen to free his small jagir of Poona and based his future greatness on that small beginning, entirely relying on his own effort and initiative. . . . He judged the capacities of men and created his own helpmates and servants by enabling them to do great things, so that he could succeed in what appeared impossible at the beginning. He welded the scattered elements of his people into a united body and with their help accomplished his main object.

'Dealing differently with different opponents he established an independent kingdom of his own stretching from Salher and Ahiwant in West Khandesh to Tanjore on the Kaveri, with unchallenged supremacy, erecting for its defence hundreds of forts and several sea-bases with extensive market places. . . . He elevated his Marātha nation consisting of 96 clans to an unheard of dignity, crowning the whole achievement by occupying an exalted throne and assuming the title of Chhatrapati. All this he did for the defence of his religion, for putting Gods and Brāhmanas in a position enabling them to have their proper functions performed without molestation. Under Shivaji's rule

<sup>1</sup> G. S. Sardesai, *New History of the Marathas*, Vol. I, pp. 261-9, 272, 279, 282, 288-9.)

<sup>2</sup> Shivaji (1627 or 1630-80) was, as Jadunath Sarkar said, 'the last great (Hindu) constructive genius and nation-builder' who 'taught the modern Hindus to rise to the full stature of their growth'. He exemplifies the high ideals of Hindu monarchy. Tolerant, liberal and courageous, he was cunning and ruthless when necessary. He was an inspiration to modern Hindu nationalism.—Ed.



robberies and injustice became unknown, and his commands came to be strictly obeyed by all.'

So much for the best contemporary estimate of him. We can say that Shivaji's principal service lies in his having quickly transformed the inherent lawlessness of the Marāṭha people into a national solidarity by his unequalled leadership, enabling them to attain to the foremost place among the various races of India. . . . He placed before the nation the higher ideal of *Swarājya*, of political emancipation from the chains of grinding slavery that held down his country for centuries together. . . . His aim in life was primarily spiritual rather than political. He severely resented Muslim interference with the religious practices of the Hindus, and tried to make his land safe for sincere believers of every creed. As this could not be done without political power, he had of necessity to achieve that power.

A large number of papers of his period has lately been printed, which particularly disclose this phase of Shivaji's endeavour. Gods, Brāhmaṇas, Saints, and Shrines are words ever-present in his mind, as these papers reveal. It is a historical fact that wherever Shivaji went, be it Agra, Karwar, Tanjore or elsewhere, his first concern was to find out the celebrated shrines of the vicinity and the men of saintly character and learning that congregated at such places. . . . Often he used to lose sight of his objective and suddenly get into a mystic pensive mood, after having met with some souls of extraordinary spiritual power. He never undertook a serious task without first consulting his *gurus*. Shivaji made no distinction in this respect between a Hindu and a Muslim saint. He honoured all with equal respect. At his capital Raigad he erected a special mosque for Muslim devotees in front of his palace in the same way that he built there the temple of Jagadīśvar for his own daily worship.

His main object was to win religious freedom and not territory. He certainly would have been foremost to defend the Hindu religion all over India. '*Hindavi-Swarājya*' was the title he has used for his national scheme in one of his letters . . . meaning thereby that he wanted to strive for a Hindu religious autonomy for the whole country.

In defending the Hindu religion, Shivaji was in no way actuated by any hatred towards the Muslims as a sect or towards their religion. Full religious liberty for all was his ideal and the practice in his state. He revered Muslim saints like Bawa Yaqut of Kelsi to whose shrine he made a grant which is still being enjoyed. He had many devoted Muslim servants and followers who whole-heartedly co-operated with him. His chief naval commanders were Muslims, Daulat Khan and Siddi Misri. Madari Mehtar, a *farrash* (chamberlain), was a servant near his person, who helped him in his flight from Agra. Shivaji's confidential foreign secretary (*Munshi*) was one Mulla Haidar, who wrote his Persian correspondence and who was once deputed to Bahadur Khan, the Mughal viceroy in the Deccan, to negotiate a peace. A considerable portion of the population under Shivaji's rule was Muslim, but it all lived as contented and free as his Hindu subjects.

When one comes to examine Shivaji's administration, one can easily detect a few broad principles which he shrewdly brought into force as he proceeded building up his *swarājya*. They are: (1) The country was to be defended against enemies by means of well garrisoned forts; (2) All services were to be paid in cash and not by grants of land; (3) Servants were employed on the principle of merit and not heredity; (4) Revenue was not to be collected through Zamindars or middlemen but through a well-supervised government agency; (5) The system of farming lands was abolished; in other words, land revenue was never auctioned; (6) All government work was divided among well defined separate departments; (7) Equal opportunity was offered in the public service to all castes; (8) Expenditure was so budgeted as to lay by some surplus every year.

It will be noticed that all well-regulated governments of modern times have adopted these principles in their administration.—Insistence on order, implicit obedience and the strictest discipline were the rules which distinguished Shivaji as a ruler far in advance of his age, as is illustrated by the manner in which he regulated the behaviour of his troops during their campaigns of conquest or plunder.

Shivaji has been often called a plunderer and a rebel. One must examine his life minutely to determine what this charge



exactly meant. Every patriot has felt bound to rebel against the existing alien government, and it would be no wonder if Muslim writers set Shivaji down as such. Even the Marāthi writers exult in calling him a *pund* (rebel) for having liberated his land from foreign yoke. As soon as he attained the required power, he organized a regular government and advanced the interests of the subjects over whom he ruled. But he cannot be charged with being a wicked wanton plunderer. He plundered the towns and territory of the enemy as a legitimate act of war. There is no instance of his having plundered innocent people or princes who were not at war with him. Even the Muslim historian Khafi Khan absolves him from this charge. He never molested religious places such as masjids. He respected the holy Koran when obtained in plunder and returned it with due reverence. It was a strict rule in his army never to molest women, children or holy men in the course of a raid. Prisoners-of-war were very kindly treated and released after their wounds had been dressed.—Shivaji was a genius far in advance of his times. He conceived and carried out most of the reforms and measures usually associated in our days with a civilized state.

## 12

## HAIDER ALI'S FIGHT FOR NATIONAL FREEDOM

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU<sup>1</sup>

*(Haider Ali (A D 1722–82), who descended from a Quraish tribesman who migrated to India, was the son of a soldier of fortune. Admitted to the Mysore service, although illiterate, by his military exploits and genius he became a powerful general and in course of time practically the dictator of that state (1761.) With increase in power, he supplanted his patron, the Dalwai (prime minister), and very much extended the territories of his state by conquest. Although he called himself only a karyakarta (regent), he was in fact the autocrat of Mysore. He efficiently continued the old Hindu system of government, with mostly Brāhmanas as his ministers. His civil administration was mostly carried on by the Hindus; for, refusing to make his a Muslim government, he tried to*

<sup>1</sup> Jawaharlal Nehru, *Discovery of India*, pp. 233–5

*attract the best men to his service ignoring caste and creed. With a severe impartiality he dispensed justice in the traditional way. His government had 'a vigour hitherto unexampled in India'. [N. K. Sinha, Haidar Ali, Calcutta, 1949, p. 235.] He was 'a model of toleration', 'wonderfully liberal in his religious views'. [Ibid., p. 254-5.] His coins had Hindu gods on the obverse; he granted indemnity to the Tirupati temple, and rebuilt the Ranganatha temple at Seringapatam. He had Japas performed in temples, buffaloes sacrificed to Kālī and sent expeditions on auspicious days fixed by Brāhmaṇas. He had a large well-disciplined army. By joining in a great confederacy he defeated the British in 1780. As British writers themselves admitted, but for the British peace with the French, with the latter's help he would have kept South India free from British occupation. [Ibid., p. 222.] But he 'had no desire to drive the British from India only to bring the French in'. [Ibid., p. 232.]—Editor.)*

The real protagonists for power in India during the eighteenth century were four; two of these were Indian and two foreign. The Indians were the Marāthas and Haider Ali and his son Tipu Sultan in the south; the foreigners were the British and the French.

With the elimination of the French power from India, three contestants for supremacy remained—the Marātha confederacy, Haider Ali in the south, and the British. . . . Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan were formidable adversaries who inflicted a severe defeat on the British and came near to breaking the power of the East Indian Company. But they were confined to the south and did not directly affect the fortunes of India as a whole. Haider Ali was a remarkable man and one of the notable figures in Indian history. He had some kind of a national ideal and possessed the qualities of a leader with vision. Continually suffering from a painful disease, his self-discipline and capacity for hard work were astonishing. He realized, long before others did so, the importance of sea-power and the growing menace of the British based on naval strength. He tried to organize a joint effort to drive them out and, for this purpose, sent envoys to the Marāthas, the Nizam, and Shuja-ud-Dowla of Oudh. But nothing came of this. He started building his own navy and, capturing the Maldive Islands, made them his headquarters for ship-building and naval activities. He died by the wayside as he was marching with his army. His son Tipu continued



strengthening his navy. Tipu also sent messages to Napoleon and to the Sultan in Constantinople.—Tipu Sultan of Mysore was finally defeated by the British in 1799 and that left the field clear for the final contest between the Marāthas and the British East India Company.

## 13

## 'THE CONTRADICTIONS IN BRITISH RULE'

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU<sup>1</sup>*Economic and Social Changes*

The impact of Western culture on India was the impact of a dynamic society, of a 'modern' consciousness, on a static society wedded to medieval habits of thought which, however sophisticated and advanced in its own way, could not progress because of its inherent limitations. And yet, curiously enough, the agents of this historic process were not only wholly unconscious of their mission in India but, as a class, actually represented no such process. In England their class fought this historic process but the forces opposed to them were too strong for them and could not be held back. In India they had a free field and were successful in applying the brakes to that very change and progress which, in the larger context, they represented. They encouraged and consolidated the position of the socially reactionary groups in India, and opposed all those who worked for political and social change. If change came it was in spite of them or as an incidental and unexpected consequence of their other activities. The introduction of the steam engine and the railway was a big step towards a change of the medieval structure, but it was intended to consolidate their rule and facilitate the exploitation, for their own benefit, of the interior of the country. This contradiction between the deliberate policy of the British authorities in India and some of its unintended consequences produces a certain confusion and masks that

<sup>1</sup> Jawaharlal Nehru, *Discovery of India*, pp. 249, 255-7, 259-61, 284, 270, 275.

policy itself. Change came to India because of this impact of the West, but it came almost in spite of the British in India. They succeeded in slowing down the pace of that change to such an extent that even today the transition is very far from complete.

The chief business of the East India Company in its early period, the very object for which it was started, was to carry Indian manufactured goods, textiles, etc., as well as spices and the like from the East to Europe, where there was a great demand for these articles. With the developments in industrial techniques in England a new class of industrial capitalists rose there demanding a change in this policy. The British market was to be closed to Indian products and the Indian market opened to British manufactures. [This broke up textile and other old industries.]—To some extent this was inevitable as the older manufacturing came into conflict with the new industrial technique. But it was hastened by political and economic pressure and no attempt was made to apply the new techniques to India. Indeed every attempt was made to prevent this happening and thus the economic development of India was arrested and the growth of the new industry prevented.<sup>1</sup>

The liquidation of the artisan class led to unemployment on a prodigious scale. What were all these scores of millions, who had so far been engaged in industry and manufacture, to do now? Where were they to go? Their old profession was no longer open to them, the way to a new one was barred. They could die of course; that way of escape from an intolerable situation is always open. They did die in tens of millions.—But still vast numbers of them remained and these increased from year to year as British policy affected remoter areas of the country and created more unemployment. All these hordes of artisans and craftsmen had no job, no work, and all their ancient skill was useless. They drifted to the land, for the land was still there. But the land was fully occupied and could not possibly absorb them profitably. So they became a burden on the land and the burden grew, and with it grew the poverty of the

<sup>1</sup> Nehru elsewhere says this arrested social growth. The decisions of British courts based on old texts perpetuated antique laws unmodified by customs, whereas previously Hindu law was based on custom and was changed and reinterpreted by new customs. This too resulted in stagnation.—Editor.



country, and the standard of living fell to incredibly low levels.

This then is the real, the fundamental, cause of the appalling poverty of the Indian people, and it is of comparatively recent origin. Other causes that contribute to it are themselves the result of this poverty and chronic starvation and under-nourishment—like disease and illiteracy. Excessive population is unfortunate and steps should be taken to curb it wherever necessary, but it still compares favourably with the density of population of many industrialized countries.

India was under an industrial-capitalist regime but her economy was largely that of the pre-capitalist period, minus many of the wealth-producing elements of that pre-capitalist economy. She became a passive agent of modern industrial capitalism, suffering all its ills and with hardly any of its advantages.—The world market that the new capitalism was building up would have, in any event, affected India's economic system. The self-sufficient village community, with its traditional division of labour, could not have continued in its old form. But the change that took place was not a normal development and it disintegrated the whole economic and structural basis of Indian society. A system which had social sanctions and controls behind it and was a part of the people's cultural heritage was suddenly and forcibly changed and another system, administered from outside the group, was imposed. India did not come into a world market but became a colonial and agricultural appendage of the British structure.

A more direct blow came from the introduction of the landlord system, changing the whole conception of ownership of land. This conception had been one of communal ownership, not so much of the land as of the produce of the land. Possibly not fully appreciating this, but more probably taking the step deliberately for reasons of their own, the British governors, themselves representing the English landlord class, introduced something resembling the English system in India. . . . The introduction of this type of property in land was not only a great economic change, but it went deeper and struck at the whole Indian conception of a co-operative group social structure. A new class, the owners of land, appeared; a class created by, and therefore to a large extent identified with, the British

Government. The break-up of the old system created new problems, and probably the beginnings of the new Hindu-Muslim problem can be traced to it. . . . Thus Bengal became a province predominantly of Hindu landlords while their tenants, though both Hindu and Muslim, were chiefly the latter.

British rule thus consolidated itself by creating new classes and vested interests who were tied up with that rule and whose privileges depended on its continuance.<sup>1</sup> There were the land-owners and the princes, and there was a large number of subordinate members of the services in various departments of government, from the *patwari*, the village headman, upwards.

We notice in India that inherent contradiction in British rule. Having brought about the political unification of the country and thus let loose new dynamic forces which thought not only in terms of that unity but aimed at the freedom of India, the British Government tried to disrupt that very unity it had helped to create. That disruption was not thought of in political terms then as a splitting up of India; it was aimed at the weakening of nationalist elements so that British rule might continue over the whole country. But it was nonetheless an attempt at disruption, by giving greater importance to the Indian States than they had ever had before, by encouraging reactionary elements and looking to them for support, by promoting divisions and encouraging one group against another, by encouraging fissiparous tendencies due to religion or province, and by organizing quisling classes which were afraid of a change which might engulf them. All this was a natural and understandable policy for a foreign imperialist power to pursue, and it is a little naïve to be surprised at it.

### *Dawn of Modern Consciousness*

All these [printing presses, etc.] and other like changes crept in, gradually influencing the Indian mind and giving rise to the 'modern' consciousness. Only a small group was directly influenced by the thought of Europe for India clung to her own philosophic background, considering it superior to that of the

<sup>1</sup> Nehru elsewhere remarks that the 'sterile alien rule' preserved and created groups and classes which had no real significance and which would have been pushed aside by new forces if they did not have foreign protection. In every way the British arrested India's growth and normal adjustment of power-relationships within society.—Ed.



West. The real impact and influence of the West were on the practical side of life which was obviously superior to the Eastern. The new techniques—the railway train, the printing press, other machinery, more efficient ways of warfare—could not be ignored, and these came up against old methods of thought almost unawares, by indirect approaches, creating a conflict in the mind of India. The most obvious and far-reaching change was the break-up of the agrarian system and the introduction of conceptions of private property and land-lordism. Money economy had crept in and 'land became a marketable commodity. What had once been held rigid by custom was dissolved by money.'

Over these disjointed and broken-up foundations rose new groups and classes, the products of British rule and connected with it in many ways. There were the merchants who were really middlemen of British trade and industry, profiting by the leavings of that industry. There were also the English-educated classes in the subordinate services and the learned professions, both looking to the British Power for advancement and both influenced in varying degrees by Western thought. Among these grew up a spirit of revolt against the rigid conventions and social framework of Hindu society. They looked to English liberalism and institutions for inspiration.

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## THE BENEFITS OF BRITISH RULE

*Britain and India*V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI<sup>1</sup>

The connection between Great Britain and India is meant for high purposes under God, . . . some of those purposes have been achieved, but . . . there are larger purposes still that have not yet unfolded. Not only have standards of efficiency and thoroughness in administration been raised far above the level reached at any time before in our history, but the springs of public conduct have been purified, official probity has received

<sup>1</sup> V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, Quoted from *A Political Biography* by P. Kodanda Rao, pp. 148. 171-2.

a new meaning, public opinion has been taught and encouraged, in spite of frequent lapses, to assert itself, and whether between sexes, between capital and labour, or between teacher and pupil, a nobler and more chivalrous relation has been established, beyond danger, let us hope, of being forgotten when Britain's hand is withdrawn from the helm. Who, again, would hesitate to acknowledge handsomely the awakening of the social conscience towards the servile and depressed classes as a result of Western ideals? Why, the national ambition, of which the intensity is proving a serious embarrassment to the Government, is itself the product of English education. . . . Our tale of indebtedness would not be complete if we did not pay an unreserved tribute of admiration and gratitude to the loving devotion and heroic sense of duty with which many missionaries, teachers and officials from the West have laboured for the good of the people of this land and the unstinted homage and welcome of our hearts to the men and women of another race who recognize in the present distracted political movement the throes of a nation's birth and rejoice in openly championing the claims of those brethren among whom their lot is cast. . . . This record, mixed, it is true, of lights and shadows, . . . [is] hardly to be matched for general beneficence in the long and chequered history of man.

*The State in India strengthened by British Administration*

M. RUTHNASWAMY<sup>1</sup>

Whatever may be our judgement on the moral and material results of British administration, of its political services there can be no large extent of doubt. To have brought back large masses of the population of India distracted by the absence, or the multiplication, or the caprice of authority which was the political feature of the last days of Mughal rule and to have taught them the art of peaceful obedience was no mean achievement. . . . To have diffused executive authority to every corner of the vast country. . . . To have made the authorities at the circumference pay due obedience to the rule of the supreme Government was to make a larger contribution to the making of

<sup>1</sup> M. Ruthnaswamy, *British Administrative System in India*, pp. 567-8, 658-9.



the state in India than all previous rulers of India had accomplished. To have vindicated the autonomy though not the independence of the executive . . . is no mean achievement. [To have] built roads, irrigation dams and canals, hospitals and dispensaries and schools and colleges was to bind the people to the state by other chains of interest and gratitude. . . . [All this] was no despicable method of strengthening the foundations of the state in India.

### *British Administration in India*

The British administrative system takes its place with other administrative systems that are bound up with the fortunes of peoples—with that of Peru, of the Byzantine Empire, of Sicily under Frederic II, of Prussia under the Hohenzollerns, of France remade by Napoleon. It is no exaggeration to say that the political formation of no people owes so much to administration as that of the people of India. The political gains and losses of India, the political virtues and defects of the people, the strength as well as the weakness of their political armour may, most of them, be laid at the door of the administration. Political unity was attained through the administration—by its own action as well as by reactions against it. Its incessant activity, through its progressively numerous and beneficent departments, has brought a people given over to political renunciation into the richer and fuller life of the modern state. Of its own will and on its own initiative it has set free currents that have galvanized the people into educational, social and economic progress. It has assembled a well-knit, co-ordinated, and heirarchical system of administration that has given the people the machinery that they can use for the highest ends of the state. It created the professional middle class like the Equestrian class under the Roman empire. But there is the other side of the balance-sheet. The unity that it gave to the people was only administrative unity. It might have given them by a bolder policy in the field of army organization, administrative recruitment, and social reform, a more organic and a more political unity. It might have done more for social and economic progress. It might have done many things which it has not done and omitted many things which it has. But this is only to say that it is not a perfect system. No one has made

that claim for it. But taken all in all, the British administrative system in India is one of the noblest structures whose records illuminate the annals of the art of administration.

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## CONTEMPORARY INDIA

K. M. PANIKKAR<sup>1</sup>*The New Civilization of India*

What New India represents is not merely the establishment of a new Asian State, but the emergence of a new civilization.

The inheritance that India has stepped into is only partly Hindu and Indian. The inheritance from the West is no less important in many fields. Modern India does not live under the laws of Manu. Its mental background and equipment, though largely influenced by the persistence of Indian tradition, have been moulded into their present shape by over a hundred years of Western education extending practically to every field of mental activity. Its social ideals are not what Hindu society had for long cherished, but those assimilated from the West and derived predominantly from the doctrines of the French Revolution, and to a lesser, though to an increasing, extent from the teachings of Marx and the lessons of the Soviet experiment. Even the religious beliefs of Hinduism have been transformed substantially during the course of the last hundred years. In fact it will be no exaggeration to say that the New Indian State represents traditions, ideals and principles which are the results of an effective but imperfect synthesis between the East and the West... The social reformation in Hindu society, the emancipation of the untouchable classes, the profoundly significant purification of Hinduism, all of which are of greater and more permanent significance than even the emergence of India as an independent state, are the outward reflections of that Western inheritance. The organization of the democratic state, its secular character, the structure of its

<sup>1</sup> K. M. Panikkar, *The Foundations of New India*, pp. 15-19, 21-2, 253-4, 24, 32, 36, 139, 137.



institutions and the political principles underlying them are also essentially European in their inspiration.

The tradition of India has always been one of synthesis. Her geographical position perhaps helped her to develop a singular ability to absorb the culture of others and assimilate it without losing her own identity. It is the synthesis of the Āryan and the Dravidian that laid the basis of Hindu civilization.—The prolonged contact with Islam had, as we know, profound significance for every aspect of Indian life, religion, literature, art and social organization and economic structure. This co-operative attitude with what comes from outside enabled India, during the last 150 years of contact with the West, to accept as her own and assimilate the knowledge and thought of Europe to an extent which has enabled her to adjust herself to the new world without undergoing a violent revolution. A meeting ground of the East and the West at least from the time of Alexander, claiming spiritual kinship with both, India was historically well fitted for evolving a new society based on the synthesis of Europe and Asia . . . But, it may be emphasized, India is no home of a *mestizo* civilization, a new way of life foreign to the soil, or unrelated to its past, a mere borrowed thing, which however showy and brilliant is alien to the genius of its people. Unlike some of the new communities of Latin America, where a predominantly *mestizo* population has taken over bodily the culture, attitude and way of life of Europe and has attempted to reproduce on its soil a civilization which has but little in common with the traditions of the indigenous races, modern India continues to be essentially Indian, certain of her own individuality, drawing spiritual inspiration and sustenance from her own past. Europe has added to it richness, has given her, as other influences in the past have given her, a new vitality and a new vision, and has helped her to reorganize herself by assimilating ideas, principles and purposes which were necessary for her transformation into a modern society.

The new civilization which Modern India represents is an undoubted fact, and the survivals<sup>†</sup> which obscure it in some respects are but the evidence of its continuity, of its having grown naturally and without effort from the old trunk. . . . Indeed what has happened in India is a revolution. The fact

<sup>†</sup> Panikkar refers to cow worship, fakirs, etc.

that the transfer of political power was peacefully effected does not detract from the revolutionary character either of the struggle, or the qualitative character of the change which both the struggle and the transfer brought about . . . What her leaders are seeking to do is to create a new civilization which absorbs and assimilates important elements from the rest of the world but builds on her own historical foundations. It is more than a process of modernization. It is an attempt to extend the bases of her own life by the acceptance of ideas like freedom, equality, government by consent with the participation of all sections, which were alien to her inherited social conceptions. It also seeks to build on the foundations of modern science, technology and large-scale industrial production. A welfare state which enables its members to live a materially good life, provides them with the goods and services which will make their lives easier, better and less subjected to the strain of poverty, illness and other avoidable hardships, while at the same time cultivating her own ethical and spiritual values, is the ideal for which India is working today. . . . It is without doubt the greatest attempt in democracy that has ever been made. More, it is unique in the sense that it is the first revolution consciously undertaken through democratic processes. . . . The real question which will determine the importance of the Indian Revolution in world history is the durability of the change now taking place in India.

*How did this New Civilization Arise?*

The movement that culminated in the emergence of India as an independent nation had three main aspects, inter-related in their action, deriving inspiration from common sources, but separated in their areas of operation. These may be briefly described as the creation of a spiritual background for political action, a renovation of social foundations and an intellectual ferment creating and expressing a broader and more universal humanism as the basis of India's new life.

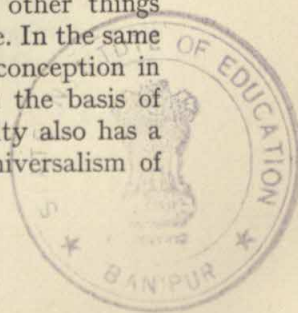
(1) The revival of Vedānta in Hindu thought at the end of the nineteenth and in the first two decades of the twentieth century constitutes a religious movement of national significance. It was at the end of this period that Aurobindo gave what may be called the classic exposition of the entire Vedānta



doctrine in his *Essays on the Gītā* and later in his *Life Divine*. By this, Vedānta may be said to have been restored to its place as the common background of all Hindu religious thought.

(2) New India has started on a wide programme of social adjustment, the object of which is to transform Hindu society from an amorphous mass into an integrated community, capable of absorbing the ideals of modern democratic life. In order to do this it was necessary to separate religion from social institutions and also to reform the religious beliefs, so as to provide a common background to the community and create in them a sense of solidarity. This was the achievement of the Hindu reformation which acting through many channels and deriving its inspiration from many sources, national and foreign, revived the higher religious truths of Hinduism and provided the Hindu people with a sense of unity and an urge for social welfare. [Industrialization, new social forces, legislation and the awakening of the masses by the Independence movement aided this.]

(3) The intellectual ferment which provided the background of the movement for political independence was essentially the result of the assimilation of European thought and ideas by the educated classes and its infiltration through the Indian languages. Its results have not been insignificant. It has created in India a new humanism, which attempts to create a synthesis between the East and the West, accepting many of the ideals of European civilization and modifying them in terms of India's own tradition.—[The basic ideals of this new humanism] can be briefly stated as a modern and Indian interpretation of liberty, equality and fraternity. They are modern because the economic movements of the nineteenth century have given a new content to these ideas. They have taken an Indian form because liberty, for example, means in India not merely the acquisition of political independence, but the emancipation of women, freedom for the suppressed classes, liquidation of feudal elements within the country and many other things which have ceased to have significance in Europe. In the same way, equality is a dynamic and revolutionary conception in India, as society has always been organized on the basis of inequality, of caste and untouchability. Fraternity also has a different significance in India, for while the universalism of



Hindu thought emphasizes the motive of action as *Loka samgraha* or welfare of the world, the practical experience of the subordination of the non-white races and the prevalence of discrimination by European peoples have given to Indian thought on this subject its colour and temper. It is the fraternity of the oppressed which has moved the mind of modern India. The Marxian doctrine of fraternity 'Workers of the world unite' found in India a corollary 'the oppressed of the world unite' and this feeling has been deeply ingrained in the Indian mind.



## C

## THE CULTURE OF INDIA

## I

## UNITY IN DIVERSITY AND TOLERANCE

C. P. RAMASWAMI AIYAR<sup>1</sup>

Even prior to the earliest recorded invasion generally attributed to the Āryans, several ethnical elements must have been introduced into India from the days of the palaeolithic man. . . . There were close contacts between the races and civilizations of Asia Minor (South-east Europe) and prehistoric India. . . . *The unity in diversity which is characteristic of India*<sup>2</sup> stems from a mixture of races and civilizations from the earliest period. The superficial diversity from the physical and ethnological points of view is, in truth, less significant than the resultant unity. That unity is rightly to be ascribed to the circumstance that the variegated peoples of India have, in the course of the ages, developed a culture and civilization that may be rightly characterized as a marvellous amalgam.

The point to be noticed about the progress of the Āryans is the very speedy fusion of the Āryans and the non-Āryans. This process demonstrated three phases: (1) The elevation of the non-Āryans and Aborigines by inter-marriages between the Āryans and the non-Āryans; (2) The incorporation into Āryan society in various ways of non-Āryans; and (3) Social reactions by which forms of life and modes of thought of the two groups underwent a species of osmosis which became most pronounced as a result of the Buddhist protestant reformation.

A *universalist attitude* was in evidence in the earliest of the Vedas. The *Rig-Veda* (VIII, 51-9) sings: 'The Lord God of Glory

<sup>1</sup> C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, *Hinduism and Tolerance*, pp. 1, 3, 2, 5-11, 13, 16-22, 29, 30, 24-5, 28.

<sup>2</sup> Italics ours throughout this extract.—Ed.

is He to Whom both Ārya and Dāsa belong'. In the same Veda (V, 87-9) there is a prayer for the forgiveness of sins committed against the foreigner. The *Atharva Veda* (IV, 16-18) goes to the extent of saying: God is of the foreigner (*Videśya*) as much as of our own land (*Samdeśya*).

It has indeed been suggested that the doctrine of transmigration or metempsychosis itself was adopted by the Āryans from earlier settlers as well as the cult of serpent worship, the worship of Ganeśa (the elephant-headed God), of Umā or Durgā (the Mother), of Skanda or Subrahmanya (the hunter-God). Some have even asserted that the incarnation of Kṛṣṇa was an adaptation from an aboriginal deity and that His life affords an instance of the mingling of the Āryans with the Yādavas. In any case, it seems to be clear that much absorption took place of the thoughts and beliefs of the pre-Āryan races with those of the Āryans.—A remarkable instance of the continuous process of the assimilation of ideas is furnished by the introduction of *Sūrya* (Sun) worship into India. Both the *Varāha* and the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇas* refer to its introduction from Śakadvīpa, namely the territory of the Śakas or the Scythians. Obviously sun worship and fire worship originated in the Persian Uplands and were brought to India at a later stage when the Āryans had colonized North India.—A consideration of these facts will indicate how composite was the Hindu civilization. The *Sāma Veda* exemplified this aspect clearly. It speaks at length of the *Vrātyastoma* (a particular sacrifice or ritual) by means of which non-Āryans (*Vrātyas*) were admitted to the Āryan society.

Both Buddha and Mahāvīra, the founder of Jainism, while admitting that the Brāhmana ideal is the right one, yet, led a crusade against certain recently developed aspects of Brāhmana culture and tradition. . . . The Hindu civilization adapted many of the ideals and precepts of Buddhism and Jainism.—The Edicts of Aśoka which not only encouraged but gave practical illustrations of Buddhist philosophy in action, elucidate the essential spirit of Buddhism which is an inheritance from Hindu thought.—It is impossible to elucidate the spirit of tolerance better than by a passage in the Rock Edict:—'verily the concord of all religious is meritorious'. . . .

The instinct of universality and the feeling of the realization



of the Supreme must connote a sympathy with and a reconciliation of many forms of thought and belief. . . . The Tamil poet, Thāyumānavār, himself a Dravidian and non-Brāhmaṇa, sings: 'The supreme knowledge envelops and absorbs all forms of belief as the ocean absorbs all rivers.'

In cultural and other matters, the close contact that took place between India and farflung countries to the east and west have been brought to light by research workers. As early as the *Atharva Veda*, a charm for snake-bite is supposed to have been administered by the daughter of a physician from Urga which has been identified by some as the Ur of the Chaldeans. Candra Gupta Maurya adopted Persian dress and Persian ceremonials and the inscriptions used by Aśoka in so many of his Memorial Pillars were in the Aramaic form of writing, i.e. from right to left. The influence exercised by Persian sculptors on Aśokan art forms, and especially the stūpas, cannot be ignored. The Greek settlements founded after Alexander's conquests also brought about intimate mutual contacts. St Chrysostom in AD 117 says that Greek plays were staged in India and, indeed, the name for the drop curtain is *Yavanikā* meaning the Greek device. The Romaka and Paulisa schools of astronomy influenced Indian science profoundly.—Many Greeks were converted to Vaiṣṇavism and Buddhism.—Even later, during the Gupta times, Varāhamira the great Indian astronomer whose name itself sounds very Persian, admittedly incorporated Greek principles in his *Panca Siddhāntikā*. The Northern Indian formal costume comprising the achkan and pyjama shows the influence exercised by Persian fashions upon Indian habits.—Kaniṣka founded a Chinese settlement called the *Chīnabhukti* in East Punjab and incidentally introduced the cultivation of the peach and the pear in India. It was only after the Gupta period and as the result of a reaction against what was deemed to be an injurious race mixture (*Varṇa-Sankara*) that caste forms and caste practices became rigid and stereotyped. Much later, the contact between the Arab and the Indian civilization not only helped to extend the knowledge of Indian mathematics, philosophy and medicine to Western countries but also was instrumental in influencing Hindu thought and art.—One cannot also forget the unifying and harmonizing influence exercised by poets and social re-

formers like Kabir and Guru Nānak whose object was to bring harmony between the Hindus and the Muslims.

It is amply proved from the testimony of Tamil Epics like the *Silappāthikāram*, written in the second century AD, that not only was there no sectarian rancour between the Dravidian and the Āryan elements, but also no hostility between the established forms of Hindu faith and dissenting sects like Jainism and Buddhism.—The same toleration was carried by the Bengal, Orissa and South Indian colonists who established settlements in Cambodia, Java, Sumatra, Bali, Thailand and Champak.<sup>1</sup> . . .

The Apostle Thomas is reported to have arrived in India in the first century AD. But, in any case, at the time of Eusebius, there were Christians in India who, in his language, peacefully followed St Matthew's Gospel. . . . When, in the fourth century, the Sassanid Persian Emperor began to persecute Christians, a number of bishops and clergymen and lay people fled to India; and, according to the Kottayam Copper Plate (a grant issued by the King of Cranganore), Christians were allowed freedom of worship and also the privileges of the highest caste. Later on, churches in Travancore were actually built with the help of grants by Hindu kings. . . . Similarly, the Jews, fleeing from persecution by the Romans early in the first century AD settled on the west coast of India and received similar charter and were enabled to build synagogues.—In AD 716 many fire worshippers who were the ancestors of the present Parsees, flying from religious persecution, landed in Sanjan on the west coast of India. They built fire temples through the assistance of Hindu rulers.

The rise of the Rājput clans which played a prominent part in Indian history is itself an instance of the Indian genius for assimilation. Many of the Rājputs claim to be Kṣatriyas. There were many Brāhmana dynasties like the Śungas and the Kānvas who practically became Kṣatriyas. It is argued with great plausibility that some of the most distinguished of the Kṣatriya clans like the Parhārs, the Chauhāns, the Pawārs and the Sisodias are descendants of invading nationalities. These foreigners were absorbed into the Hindu fold and were furnished

<sup>1</sup> Aiyar quotes the Arab and Persian visitors Ibn Batuta (AD 1347) and Abdur Razak (fifteenth century) who testified to Hindu tolerance.—Ed.



with Āryan genealogies.—When masses of invaders entered India and the Islamic invasions became a regular feature, a process similar to the one already sketched with reference to the Āryan invasion, took place side by side with occasional persecution.—An amalgamation of the old and new forms of speculation took place and an intermixture of Hindu concepts and the rigid Islamic monotheism also took place.—After the fall of the Marāṭha and the Sikh rulers and the establishment of British supremacy and after an interregnum or period of darkness, the same process of assimilating the new experience with the old faith continued.

*The fundamental and inseparable aspects of Hinduism* are its fearlessness and spirit of enquiry (*Abhaya* and *Vicāra*), its reliance on an unalterable order of disposition of the Universe (*Dharma* or *Rta*), its belief in the continuity and oneness of existence and life as connoted by the ideas of *Karma* and *Samasāra* and finally its insistence on the reconciliation of different faiths and beliefs.—One of the most hopeful signs of the present day is the popularity of new interpretations of the doctrines of Sanātana Dharma or Varṇāśrama Dharma which insist on the equality of all castes and reject exclusive privileges.

It will, thus, be obvious that throughout the ages, Hinduism, save in exceptional periods and except for occasional sporadic and reactionary manifestations, has abjured exclusiveness and has assimilated the elements of several extraneous cultures and accepted an attitude not merely of negative tolerance but of positive fellowship. Hinduism, with its off-shoots, Buddhism and Jainism, was thus enabled to spread its influence over a great part of the world.—Every new and germinative idea was thus adopted without eliminating the appreciation of the old thought. In final result, divergent varieties of civilization, religion and language have been united and have evolved into a culturally unitary organism.—In a remarkable passage in the *Kūrma Purāṇa*, the following striking description is given of the country of India whose name was 'Bhāratavarṣa': 'That country is named Bhāratavarṣa where the descendants of Bharata live. Among the Bhāratas, women and men follow different avocations and are known by different *Varṇas*. They are devoted to the worship of different divinities and they are engaged in different pursuits.'

## THE SPIRITUALITY AND SYMMETRIC CHARACTER OF INDIAN CULTURE

SRI AUROBINDO<sup>1</sup>

In Indian civilization philosophy and religion, philosophy made dynamic by religion, religion enlightened by philosophy have led, the rest follow as best they can. This is indeed its first distinctive character, which it shares with the more developed Asiatic peoples, but has carried to an extraordinary degree of thoroughgoing pervasiveness. When it is spoken of as a Brāhmanical civilization, that is the real significance of the phrase. The phrase cannot truly imply any domination of sacerdotalism, though in some lower aspects of the culture the sacerdotal mind has been only too prominent; for the priest as such has had no hand in shaping the great lines of the culture. But it is true that its main motives have been shaped by philosophic thinkers and religious minds, not by any means all of them of Brāhmaṇa birth. . . . Indian culture has been from the beginning and has remained a spiritual, an inward-looking religio-philosophical culture. Everything else in it has derived from that one central and original peculiarity or has been in some way dependent on it or subordinate to it; even external life has been subjected to the inward look of the spirit.—Philosophy and religion are the soul of Indian culture, inseparable from each other and interpenetrative. The whole objective of Indian philosophy, its entire *raison d'être*, is knowledge of the spirit, the experience of it and the right way to a spiritual existence; its single aim coincides with the highest significance of religion. Indian religion draws all its characteristic value from the spiritual philosophy which illumines its supreme aspiration and colours even most of what is drawn from an inferior range of religious experience.

This forms the gravamen of the charge against the effective value of Indian philosophy, that it turns away from life, nature, vital will and the effort of man upon earth. It denies all value to life; it leads not towards the study of nature, but away from it.

<sup>1</sup> Sri Aurobindo, *The Foundations of Indian Culture*, pp. 59, 60, 63, 76–80, 82–3, 86, 124–6.



It expels all volitional individuality; it preaches the unreality of the world, detachment from terrestrial interests, the unimportance of the life of the moment compared with the endless chain of past and future existences. It is an enervating metaphysic tangled up with false notions of pessimism, asceticism, Karma and reincarnation—all of them ideas fatal to that supreme spiritual thing, volitional individuality. This is a grotesquely exaggerated and false notion of Indian culture and philosophy, got up by presenting one side only of the Indian mind in colours of a sombre emphasis.—To say that Indian philosophy has led away from the study of nature is to state a gross unfact and to ignore the magnificent history of Indian civilization. If by nature is meant physical Nature, the plain truth is that no nation before the modern epoch carried scientific research so far and with such signal success as India of ancient times.—Not only was India in the first rank in mathematics, astronomy, chemistry, medicine, surgery, all the branches of physical knowledge which were practised in ancient times, but she was, along with the Greeks, the teacher of the Arabs from whom Europe recovered the lost habit of scientific enquiry and got the basis from which modern science started. In many directions India had the priority of discovery.<sup>1</sup>—A remarkable feature of the Indian mind was a close attention to the things of life, a disposition to observe minutely its salient facts, to systematize and to found in each department of it a science, śāstra, well-founded scheme and rule. . . .

It is perfectly true that Indian science came abruptly to a halt somewhere about the thirteenth century and a period of darkness and inactivity prevented it from proceeding forward or sharing at once in the vast modern development of scientific knowledge. But this was not due to any increase or intolerance of the metaphysical tendency calling the national mind away from physical nature. It was part of a general cessation of new intellectual activity, for philosophy too ceased to develop almost at the same time. The last great original attempts at spiritual philosophy are dated only a century or two later than the names of the last great original scientists. It is true also that Indian metaphysics did not attempt, as modern philosophy

<sup>1</sup> Aurobindo refers to the decimal notation and the heliocentric theory.  
Editor.

has attempted without success, to read the truth of existence principally by the light of the truths of physical Nature. This ancient wisdom founded itself rather upon an inner experimental psychology and a profound psychic science, India's special strength.—From the beginning, from as early as the thought of the Vedas, the Indian mind had recognized that the same general laws and powers hold in the spiritual, the psychological and the physical existence. It discovered too the omnipresence of life, affirmed the evolution of the soul in Nature from the vegetable and the animal to the human form, asserted on the basis of philosophic intuition and spiritual and psychological experience many of the truths which modern science is reaffirming from its own side of the approach to knowledge. These things too were not the results of a barren and empty metaphysics, not the inventions of bovine navelgazing dreamers.

Equally is it a misrepresentation to say that Indian culture denies all value to life, detaches from terrestrial interests and insists on the unimportance of the life of the moment.—The ancient civilization of India founded itself very expressly upon four human interests; first, desire and enjoyment, next, material, economic and other aims and needs of the mind and body, thirdly, ethical conduct and the right law of individual and social life, and, lastly spiritual liberation; *kāma*, *artha*, *dharma*, *mokṣa*. The business of culture and social organization was to lead, to satisfy, to support these things in man and to build some harmony of the forms and motives. Except in very rare cases the satisfaction of the three mundane objects must run before the other; fullness of life must precede the surpassing of life. The debt to the family, the community and the gods could not be scamped; earth must have her due and the relative its play, even if beyond it there was the glory of heaven or the peace of the Absolute. There was no preaching of a general rush to the cave and the hermitage.

The symmetric character of ancient Indian life and the vivid variety of its literature were inconsistent with any exclusive other-worldly direction. The great mass of Sanskrit literature is a literature of human life; certain philosophic and religious writings are devoted to the withdrawal from it, but even these are not as a rule contemptuous of its value. If the Indian mind gave the highest importance to a spiritual release—and what-



ever the positivist mood may say, a spiritual liberation of some kind is the highest possibility of the human spirit—it was not interested in that alone. It looked equally at ethics, law, politics, society, the sciences, the arts and crafts, everything that appertains to human life. It thought on these things deeply and scrutinizingly and it wrote of them with power and knowledge. . . .

It is preposterous, it is a stupid misunderstanding to speak of reincarnation as a doctrine which preaches the unimportance of the life of the moment compared with the endless chain of past and future existences. The doctrine of reincarnation and Karma tells us that the soul has a past which shaped its present birth and existence; it has a future which our present action is shaping; our past has taken and our future will take the form of recurring terrestrial births and Karma, our own action, is the power which by its continuity and development as a subjective and objective force determines the whole nature and eventuality of these repeated existences. There is nothing here to depreciate the importance of the present life. On the contrary the doctrine gives it immense vistas and enormously enhances the value of effort and action. The nature of the present act is of an incalculable importance because it determines not only our immediate but our subsequent future. There will be found too insistently pervading Indian literature and deeply settled in the mind of the people the idea of a whole-hearted concentrated present action and energy, *tapasya*, as a miraculous all-powerful force for the acquisition of our desires, whether the material or the spiritual desires of the human will.

The point to be pressed is that Indian spirituality in its greatest eras and in its inmost significance has not been a tired quietism or a conventional monasticism, but a high effort of the human spirit to rise beyond the life of desire and vital satisfaction and arrive at an acme of spiritual calm, greatness, strength, illumination, divine realization, settled peace and bliss.

In the history of all great cultures. . . we find a passage through three periods.—There is a first period of large and loose formation; there is a second period in which we see a fixing of forms, moulds and rhythms; and there is a closing or a critical period of superannuation, decay and disintegration. This last

stage is the supreme crisis in the life of a civilization; if it cannot transform itself, it enters into a slow lingering decline or else collapses.—But if it is able to shake itself free of limiting forms, to renovate its ideas and to give a new scope to its spirit . . . then there is a rebirth . . . a true renaissance. . . . Indian civilization passed in its own large and leisurely manner through all these stages.—Each of these three stages has its special significance for the student of culture. If we would understand the essential spirit of Indian civilization, we must go back to its first formative period, the early epoch of the Veda and the Upaniṣads, its heroic creative seed-time. If we would study the fixed forms of its spirit and discern the thing it eventually realized as the basic rhythm of its life, we must look with an observing eye at the latter middle period of the Sāstras and the classic writings, the age of philosophy and science, legislation and political and social theory and many-sided critical thought, religious fixation, art, sculpture, painting, architecture. If we would discover the limitations, the points at which it stopped short and failed to develop its whole or its true spirit, we must observe closely the unhappy disclosures of its period of decline. If, finally, we would discover the directions it is likely to follow in its transformation, we must try to fathom what lies beneath the still confused movements of its crisis of renaissance. . . .

## 3

## THE PERMANENCE AND SIMPLICITY OF INDIAN CIVILIZATION

M. K. GANDHI<sup>1</sup>

I believe that the civilization India has evolved is not to be beaten in the world. Nothing can equal the seeds sown by our ancestors. Rome went, Greece shared the same fate; the might of the Pharaohs was broken; Japan has become westernized; of China nothing can be said; but India is still, somehow or other, sound at the foundation. The people of Europe learn their lessons from the writings of the men of Greece or Rome,

<sup>1</sup> M. K. Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj*, pp. 60-5.



which exist no longer in their former glory. In trying to learn from them, the Europeans imagine that they will avoid the mistakes of Greece and Rome. Such is their pitiable condition. In the midst of all this India remains immovable and that is her glory. It is a charge against India that her people are so uncivilized, ignorant and stolid, that it is not possible to induce them to adopt any changes. It is a charge really against our merit. What we have tested and found true on the anvil of experience, we dare not change. Many thrust their advice upon India, and she remains steady. This is her beauty: it is the sheet-anchor of our hope.

Civilization is that mode of conduct which points out to man the path of duty. Performance of duty and observance of morality are convertible terms. To observe morality is to attain mastery over our mind and our passions. So doing, we know ourselves. The Gujarati equivalent for civilization means 'good conduct'.

If this definition be correct, then India, as so many writers have shown, has nothing to learn from anybody else, and this is as it should be. We notice that the mind is a restless bird; the more it gets the more it wants, and still remains unsatisfied. The more we indulge our passions the more unbridled they become. Our ancestors, therefore, set a limit to our indulgences. They saw that happiness was largely a mental condition. A man is not necessarily happy because he is rich, or unhappy because he is poor. The rich are often seen to be unhappy, the poor to be happy. Millions will always remain poor. Observing all this, our ancestors dissuaded us from luxuries and pleasures. We have managed with the same kind of plough as existed thousands of years ago. We have retained the same kind of cottages that we had in former times and our indigenous education remains the same as before. We have had no system of life-corroding competition. Each followed his own occupation or trade and charged a regulation wage. It was not that we did not know how to invent machinery, but our forefathers knew that, if we set our hearts after such things, we would become slaves and lose our moral fibre. They, therefore, after due deliberation decided that we should only do what we could with our hands and feet. They saw that our real happiness and health consisted in a proper use of our hands and feet. They

further reasoned that large cities were a snare and a useless encumbrance and that people would not be happy in them, that there would be gangs of thieves and robbers, prostitution and vice flourishing in them and that poor men would be robbed by rich men. They were, therefore, satisfied with small villages. They saw that kings and their swords were inferior to the sword of ethics, and they, therefore, held the sovereigns of the earth to be inferior to the R̥ṣis and the Fakirs. A nation with a constitution like this is fitter to teach others than to learn from others. This nation had courts, lawyers and doctors, but they were all within bounds. Everybody knew that these professions were not particularly superior; moreover, these vakils and v aids did not rob people; they were considered people's dependants, not their masters. Justice was tolerably fair. The ordinary rule was to avoid courts. There were no touts to lure people into them. This evil, too, was noticeable only in and around capitals. The common people lived independently and followed their agricultural occupation. They enjoyed true Home Rule. . . . Where this cursed modern civilization has not reached, India remains as it was before.—

The defects<sup>1</sup> that you have shown are defects. Nobody mistakes them for ancient civilization. They remain in spite of it. Attempts have always been made and will be made to remove them. We may utilize the new spirit that is born in us for purging ourselves of these evils. . . . In no part of the world, and under no civilization, have all men attained perfection. The tendency of the Indian civilization is to elevate the moral being, that of the Western civilization is to propagate immorality. The latter is godless, the former is based on a belief in God. So understanding and so believing, it behoves every lover of India to cling to the old Indian civilization even as a child clings to the mother's breast.

This civilization is unquestionably the best, but it is to be observed that all civilizations have been on their trial. That civilization which is permanent outlives it. Because the sons of India were found wanting, its civilization has been placed in jeopardy.<sup>2</sup> But its strength is to be seen in its ability to survive

<sup>1</sup> By 'defects' Gandhi means such practices as child marriages, polyandry, animal sacrifices and temple prostitutes (*devadāsīs*).—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> Gandhi refers to 'India's slavery' under the British. His contention is



the shock. Moreover, the whole of India is not touched. Those alone who have been affected by Western civilization have become enslaved. We measure the universe by our own miserable foot-rule. When we are slaves, we think that the whole universe is enslaved. Because we are in an abject condition, we think that the whole of India is in that condition. As a matter of fact, it is not so, yet it is as well to impute our slavery to the whole of India. But if we bear in mind the above fact, we can see that if we become free, India is free. And in this thought you have a definition of Swarāj. It is Swarāj when we learn to rule ourselves. It is, therefore, in the palm of our hands.—Such Swarāj has to be experienced by each one for himself.

## 4

## INDIA AND OTHER-WORLDLINESS

BHAGAVAN DAS<sup>1</sup> AND S. RADHAKRISHNAN<sup>2</sup>

This excessive other-worldliness (in the sense of neglect of this world) with which India is debited (and not wholly wrongly either, by foreign as well as indigenous writers) has been prominent mostly only during those periods in which political and economic oppression and exploitation have been rampant. Subjected to cruel misery in this world, the people sought hope of relief from the next. Otherwise, India has always been sufficiently 'this-worldly' to have won the reputation of the land *par excellence* of silver and gold and jewels, wealth and plenty and luxury of all kinds, flowing with milk and honey, filled with corn and cotton and cattle, fruits and silk and wool, tanks and temples and palaces of stone and of marble inlaid with gems—the land whose enterprising merchants supplied, by sea as well as land, the requirements of Persia, Palestine, Egypt and Rome in the West and exchanged things of art with China in the East. Indeed it was this reputation which led to

Indians welcomed and assisted the British and kept them in India. By adopting their civilization and entering into trade with them, and quarrelling among themselves, Indians, he says, strengthened the British hold on India.—Ed.

<sup>1</sup> Bhagavan Das, *The Essential Unity of Religions*, pp. 8–9.

<sup>2</sup> S. Radhakrishnan, *Eastern Religions and Western Thought*, p. 335

her degradation, brought invasions, oppression, exploitation, and worse than all else, despiritualization and demoralization—in revolt from which she is now fighting for her soul. In happier times India's other-worldliness only illumined and softened, as with moonlight, her this-worldliness, transfigured it, filled it with reverence for God's Nature in all its manifestations, and made her people see, not the things of the Spirit with the eyes of the flesh, but the things of the flesh with the eyes of the Spirit. (Bhagavan Das)

[Wealth and material well-being:] Though it is not its own end, it helps to sustain and enrich life. There was never in India a national ideal of poverty or squalor. Spiritual life finds full scope only in communities of a certain degree of freedom from sordidness. Lives that are strained and starved cannot be religious except in a rudimentary way. Economic insecurity and individual freedom do not go together.<sup>1</sup> (S. Radhakrishnan)

## 5

IS INDIA MORE SPIRITUAL THAN  
OTHER NATIONS?K. M. PANIKKAR<sup>2</sup>

The true tradition of India is one which welcomed, assimilated and made its own what was best in the culture of other countries. Today, however, one notices a tendency, arising no doubt from a false sense of nationalism, to forget this great aspect of Indian tradition and to emphasize the self-sufficiency of Indian culture and to try and build our future on a perverted view of our past.

The doctrine of the simple life which is presumed to encourage high thinking is but the worship of poverty. Voluntary poverty is indeed a great thing and the ideal of the renunciation

<sup>1</sup> On the distinction between the 'Spiritual East' and the 'Materialistic West' Swami Vivekananda commented: 'Nonsense! There is nothing spiritual about poverty, disease and dirt.' Cp. Tagore: 'I refuse to imagine any special value in poverty when it is a mere negation.' (*The Religion of Man*, p. 179) —Ed.

<sup>2</sup> K. M. Panikkar, *The State and the Citizen*, pp. 14-17.



of wants on which alone it could be based is something which the world has respected at all times. But to accept poverty as a national ideal is something which is totally absurd. At no time in India was this preached as an ideal. The *Vedic* hymns are prayers for more and more wealth. All the descriptions which have come down to us of life in ancient India, except of course of the *ṛṣis* living in isolated *tapovanas*, show the emphasis on economic prosperity and even on personal luxury. Even the *Saptaṛṣis*, the supreme examples of renunciation, are described by Kalidasa as being clothed in gold and wearing sacred threads of pearls. All Hindu gods and goddesses, except of course Śiva, are pictured in the greatest luxury. The idea that the Hindu religion supports the doctrine of simple living seems to me to be wholly untrue.

In any case, this worship of poverty is a false creed. It was no more than a vague escapism in the days of our national poverty. But today, when the effort of the nation is directed towards greater production of wealth and its better distribution so that everyone can have a richer life this exaltation of poverty is something anti-social, which the good sense of our people will, I am convinced, reject absolutely.

On what is India's claim to greater spirituality than the rest of the world based? Is it on the ground that her thinkers in the past devoted themselves to metaphysical enquiries more than to the better ordering of society? or again, is it on the ground that greatness in the world was measured not by worldly achievement, but by spiritual attainment? On either of these grounds, it appears to me that the claim of India to be more spiritual than the rest of the world is no more than a self-deception. Even assuming that the ancient seers of the *Vedas* and the *Upaniṣads* had attained greater spiritual heights and that the store of wisdom in our sacred books is greater, unless it is a fact that our life is ordered on the basis of that wisdom, and the conduct of men, by and large, in India is guided by those spiritual qualities, it cannot be maintained that India is more spiritually-minded than others. If philosophical thought, apart from activity, is the guide, then Europe can claim to be as spiritual on the basis of Christian teachings as India is or claims to be. Other-worldliness and spiritual life are preached as much in the Sermon on the Mount as in our sacred books. If

it is claimed that the difference is that while Europe does not live up to her Christian ideals India cherishes her spiritual ideals, I think the argument is altogether misleading. Nowhere in fact is materialism so rampant as in India, nowhere is the struggle for existence more rigorous, nowhere do worldliness and the desire for advantage over others have a greater hold on the people than in India. In fact, whatever the scriptures might have preached and exceptional individuals practised, the hold of materialism on India has always been as great as in other countries.

If the argument in favour of our greater spirituality is that we show honour and respect for those who have given up worldly advancement, surely this is equally true of the peoples of Europe. One has only to look at the imposing list of saints in the Christian Church, men who renounced the world for the practice of spiritual discipline, to realize that such men and women are as much honoured in the West as in India.

## 6

## 'THE KEY-NOTE OF THE COMING AGE'

RABINDRANATH TAGORE<sup>1</sup>

The main river of Indian culture has flowed in four streams—the Vedic, the Purānic, the Buddhist, and the Jain. It had its source in the heights of the Indian consciousness.

But a river belonging to a country is not fed by its own waters alone. The Tibetan Brahmaputra is a tributary to the Indian Ganges. Contributions have similarly found their way to India's original culture. The Muhammadan, for example, has repeatedly come into India from outside, laden with his own stores of knowledge and feeling and his wonderful religious democracy, bringing freshet after freshet to swell the current. In our music, our architecture, our pictorial art, our literature, the Muhammadans have made their permanent and precious contribution. Those who have studied the lives and writings of

<sup>1</sup> Rabindranath Tagore, *The Centre of Indian Culture*, pp. 34-5, 43-4, 31-3.



medieval saints, and all the great religious movements that sprang up in the time of the Muhammadan rule, know how deep is our debt to this foreign current that has so intimately mingled with our life.

And then has descended upon us the later flood of Western culture, which bids fair to break through all banks and bounds, merging all the other streams in its impetuous rush. If we can but make a separate course, through which this last may flow, we shall be saved from an irruption, whose cost may one day prove out of all proportion to its contribution, however large. . . . A river flowing within banks is truly our own, but relations with a flood are disastrously the opposite. . . .

Our forefathers did spread a single pure white carpet whereon all the world was cordially invited to take its seat in amity and good fellowship. No quarrel could have arisen there; for He, in whose name the invitation went forth, for all time to come, was *Sāntam*, *Śivam*, *Advaitam*—the Peaceful, in the heart of all conflicts; the Good, who is revealed through all losses and sufferings; the one, in all diversities of creation. And in His name was this eternal truth declared in ancient India: *He alone sees, who sees all beings as Himself*.

So we must prepare the grand field for the co-ordination of the cultures of the world. . . . But before we are in a position to stand a comparison with the other cultures of the world, or truly to co-operate with them, we must base our own structure on a synthesis of all the different cultures we have . . . [such that] all her [India's] intellectual forces will gather for the purpose of creation, and all her resources of knowledge and thought, Eastern and Western, will unite in perfect harmony. . . . She is seeking for the glorious opportunity when she will know her mind, and give her mind to the world, to help it in its progress; when she will be released from the chaos of scattered powers and the inertness of borrowed acquisition.





## PART II

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# POLITICS

'The next step beyond government by consent (the Western concept of democracy) is people's participation in government.— This would require a thorough-going system of political as well as economic decentralization.'

—Jayaprakash Narayan  
(*Swaraj for the People*, 1961)





# A

## POLITICAL SCIENCE AND THE STATE IN INDIA

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### I

## 'DHARMAŚĀSTRA' AND 'ARTHAŚĀSTRA'

U. N. GHOSHAL<sup>1</sup>

### *Age of these Śāstras*

The beginnings of political speculation among the Hindus ... may be traced back to the Vedic *Samhitās* and the *Brāhmaṇas*. ... We may follow the general trend of authoritative opinion in assigning them roughly to the period from 1200 to 600 BC. To the following period, that of growth and development of the Hindu political theory, belong the *Dharmasūtras* and ... last but not the least, the literature of *Arthaśāstra*. Of these the *Dharmasūtras* are usually assigned to the period from the sixth or seventh to the third or fourth centuries BC. ... The *Arthaśāstra* of Kautilya is ascribed by the unanimous literary tradition of the Hindus to the famous Brāhmaṇa statesman who helped the first Maurya emperor to mount the throne of Pāṭaliputra (c. 327 BC).

### *'Rājadharmā' in 'Dharmasūtras'*

As regards the *Dharmasūtras*, ... the political ideas of the priestly authors do not assume the character of a system; they are rather of the nature of scattered hints which it is left for other schools and authors to develop and mature. At the root of these ideas, however, there lies the unified concept of a social order. This involves the division of society into a number of component parts such as the four castes (*varṇas*) and the four stages of life (*āśramas*), each of which is subject to a specific body of rules. The source of all these divisions and the

<sup>1</sup> U. N. Ghoshal, *A History of Hindu Political Theories*, pp. 13-15, 36-40, 41-2, 45-7, 51-2, 61, 49-50.

duties connected with each is conceived to be the eternal *Dharma* which is embodied within the Vedas. Now we may clearly detect in this social scheme beneath an outer garb of dogma a keen appreciation of the principle of specialization and division of labour, as well as that of the organic unity of society.

The duty of protection is reserved for a special class, viz., the Kṣatriyas. This function, however, particularly belongs to the king who is indeed the Kṣatriya par excellence. In the *Dharmasūtras*, as in the later sacred literature of the *Brāhmaṇas*, the king's public functions are treated not by themselves, but as part and parcel of the Whole Duty (*rājadharmā*) of this personage, and, in a wider sense, as an incident in a comprehensive scheme of duties enjoined by the eternal *Dharma*. In other words, politics, in the sense of the sum total of the king's public functions, is here conceived not as an independent science, but as a branch of the Eternal and Positive Law governing the entire conduct of the king.

What strikes us at once in considering the theories of kingship in our present works, is their complete silence with regard to the doctrine of the king's divinity. . . . The basis of the king's authority, to begin with, is traced in one place to his fulfilment of the fundamental needs of the individual and the society. We refer to the striking dictum of Gautama that the king and the learned Brāhmaṇa together uphold the moral order of the world. . . . The King's office along with that of the Brāhmaṇa, in other words, is here vaguely conceived to be the indispensable condition of existence of the people and the foundation of the moral and the social order. . . . The concept of *Dharma* itself implies that the king is governed in the whole course of his conduct by a body of rules claiming to derive their origin from the highest source, namely, the eternal Vedas. Specifically, this responsibility to the eternal law is illustrated in the rule of the *Dharmasūtras* making the king liable to sin for the unjust exercise of his power. The *Dharmasūtras*, moreover, invoke the aid of the penitential discipline to enforce the duty of just government upon the king. With this may be connected the fact that Gautama imposes a short course of intellectual training as well as moral discipline upon the king. . . . The duty of protection is inculcated by making the king participate in the spiritual merits as well as demerits of his subjects. A truly



philosophical basis of the king's obligation to protect his subjects is suggested in a text of Baudhāyana. 'Let the king protect his subjects, receiving as his pay a sixth part.' . . . In this passage is evidently involved the view that the king is an official paid by the subjects for the service of protection. Thus the king's duty of protection would follow as a logical corollary from his collection of taxes. This doctrine of the relation of taxation to protection is one of the most important conceptions in the whole range of Hindu political theory.

### *Leading Ideas of 'Arthaśāstra'*

While the *Dharmasūtras* are the product of the Vedic theological schools and are inspired by the canonical tradition, the works with which we are concerned in the next place trace their origin to the independent schools and authors of political science (*Arthaśāstra*) and contribute some of the most original and valuable chapters to the history of Hindu political theory.

It will be well to consider the nature and scope of the science which they brought into vogue. As regards the first point, the evidence is of a twofold character. Kautilya writes in the concluding chapter of his work, 'Artha' is the means of subsistence (*vytti*) of men; it is, in other words, the earth which is filled with men. *Arthaśāstra* is the science (*śāstra*) [which deals with] the mode of acquisition and protection of that [earth]." . . .—The second line of argument is concerned with the interpretation of the parallel concept of *Danḍanīti*. Kautilya writes in one place, '*Danḍanīti* is the means of acquiring what is not gained, protecting what is gained, increasing what is protected, and bestowing the surplus upon the deserving.' It is evident that this is but an amplification of the category of acquisition and protection mentioned in the foregoing definition.

It would appear from the above that *Arthaśāstra* was essentially the Art of Government in the widest sense of the term. . . . The extracts cited by Kautilya show that the discussion of the concrete problems of administration led the early teachers of *Arthaśāstra* to enquire into the essential nature of the State institutions. . . . *Arthaśāstra*, then, while strictly public administration, tends in effect to include the theory of the State as well. . . . A perusal of Kautilya's work shows that this author treated the subjects of central and local

administration, home and foreign policy, as well as civil law and the art of warfare.

The early authors of the *Arthaśāstra* accepted as an article of their political creed the category of seven elements of sovereignty. These consist of the king (*svāmin*), the minister (*amātya*), the territory (*janapada*), the fort (*durga*), the treasury (*kośa*), the army (*danḍa*), and the ally (*mitra*). This list implies, to begin with, the monarch who is the apex of the administrative structure. The king, however, is not an omniscient and self-sufficient despot, for the *amātya* is declared to be one of his indispensable adjuncts. Further, the above definition includes the material, the financial, and the military appliances of government. Lastly, it comprises, and this is significant of the enormous importance of foreign policy in the system of the *Arthaśāstra*, an allied king. We may thus sum up the essential features of the *Arthaśāstra* idea of government by saying that it involves a king assisted by his minister and foreign ally and equipped with the necessary material appliances.

Another political category which goes back to the same early period deals with the king as the reservoir of power. . . . The three 'powers' are the power of good counsel (*mantraśakti*), the majesty of the king himself (*prabhuśakti*), and the power of energy (*utsāhaśakti*). Kautilya defines these as consisting respectively in the strength of knowledge, that of the army and the treasury, and that of heroic valour. This category, so far as it goes, obviously exhibits the state as ruled by the human qualities of physical might, energy and knowledge. The state, in other words, is viewed as a work of art, requiring the exercise of the king's mental and moral qualities for its successful direction.

The distinctive merit of the *Arthaśāstra*, it seems to us, is to be sought in its fearless freedom of thought. We thus find in the list of its teachers and schools those that did not hesitate to exclude the holy Vedas from the category of sciences on the ground of their uselessness in practical life, and those who set up the gospel of the naked self-interest of the king or even of the individual minister as the grand canon of statecraft.

#### *Comparison of these two śāstras*

Both *Arthaśāstra* and *Rājadharmā* have virtually the same



nature, involving in either case the art of government in a monarchic state. The *Arthaśāstra*, however, confines itself exclusively to the investigation of the phenomena of the state, while *Rājadharmā* deals with the same as an incident in a comprehensive scheme of duties deriving their source from the eternal Vedas. . . . It (*Arthaśāstra*) lacks the positive character attaching to the *Rājadharmā* by virtue of the latter's association with the great concept of Dharma (*Law* or *Duty*). . . . Since *Rājadharmā* is equivalent to the Whole Duty of the king, its rules are determined by the ideal of the highest good of this individual. *Arthaśāstra*, on the other hand, has avowedly for its end the security and prosperity of the state. Accordingly its rules of kingly conduct are determined primarily with reference to the interests of the state alone.

## 2

## THE HINDU CONCEPTION OF THE STATE

K. M. PANIKKAR<sup>1</sup>

Bhīṣma (in the *Mahābhārata*) established the doctrine which is basic to all Hindu thought on politics, that the state is the outcome of the desire of man for security, for a social order in which he can live in peace and enjoy the fruits of his own labour and not be subjected to *matsya nyāya* (the rule of the fish, the big ones eating up the smaller). . . . It is on this point that the ancient Hindu thinkers were at variance with the Aristotelian view, which postulated that 'the state is a creation of nature and that man is by nature a political animal'; that is man cannot be conceived outside the state. . . . Many orthodox schools of political thought in the West find in this view a justification for their exaltation of the state as being something superior to man, as a natural institution embodying the principles of highest good.—A further point of difference between the Hindu and the Greek approach to political thought may be emphasized here. . . . It is the natural equality of man and the contradiction of his having to obey others that raises

<sup>1</sup> K. M. Panikkar, *The State and the Citizen*, pp. 126–34.

the problem (in the *Mahābhārata*). But the approach of Aristotle is different. He starts with the assumption; 'that some should rule and others be ruled is not only necessary but expedient; from the hour of birth, some are marked out for subjection, others for rule'. Greek political thought, contrary to the Hindu view on politics, proceeds on an assumption of natural inequality.

That no state can exist without coercive power will not today be denied. That the state represents force both externally and internally is an obvious fact. The dualism between *dharma* and *artha*—enables Hindu thinkers to evolve a purely secular theory of state of which the sole basis is power. Bhiṣma goes even further and proclaims the doctrine that even a usurper, as he upholds social order and is the embodiment of power, should be obeyed.—*Sukranīti* goes to the extent of saying that the sovereign is only respected for his power.

It is in their analysis of the quality of the state and its functions that the Hindu thinkers on politics show the greatest originality. The basic doctrine in this connection is the conception of the state as the maker of the epoch which Bhiṣma puts pithily in the phrase, *rājā kālasya kāraṇam*. How universally accepted this view was may be seen from the fact that Manu, Nārada, Gautama and other writers on *Smṛti* elaborate and emphasize the point.—Now what is meant by saying that the sovereign is the maker of the age? The characteristics of the age, whether they be progressive, prosperous, based on social justice, reactionary, repressive or socially stagnant are the results of the sovereign's action.—It follows that the conception of the state in India was not one based on *laissez faire* or the mere maintenance of law and order, but one of direct activity to further progress.

The institutional study of the state has been a feature of Indian political thinking from the earliest times. While the doctrine of the state in the West was one of estates, based on class, as was but natural where feudal ideas prevailed, in India the state was defined as having seven *prakṛtis* or essential institutional features.<sup>1</sup> . . . Stated briefly the Hindu state involves a defined territory, a *svāmin* or a supreme head, an

<sup>1</sup> These are enumerated as the seven elements of sovereignty in the previous extract.—Ed.



organization of executive government, military power, foreign policy, and adequate financial resources. Kautilya does not mean that the ruler and the state are one, but that sovereignty involves all this.—From the very beginning the main function of the state in India was administration. As is well-known, in Kautilya's *Arthaśāstra* we have not merely a treatise on politics but a handbook of administration. The number and variety of departments whose functions Kautilya describes show that the conception of the state always included economic and public works activity, industry, irrigation, maintenance of roads, superintendence and encouragement of commerce, care of forests, etc. In fact the state described by Kautilya was all-embracing in its activity unlike the feudal states of Europe.—Another special feature of Hindu political thinking is the doctrine of the three *śaktis*.<sup>1</sup> . . . *Mantra śakti*, *prabhu śakti* and *utsāha śakti* are the governing principles of the state. *Mantra śakti* is the power of good counsel—of free discussion and careful deliberation. Special emphasis is laid on the necessity of free discussion, for good counsel on which the sovereign has to depend can only come from unfettered deliberation, *prabhu śakti* is the strength derived from sound finances and internal stability, and *utsāha śakti* is the power derived from initiative and sustained action. The purpose of higher state policy was said to combine these three.

There is a continuous insistence that in matters connected with the state it is human endeavour alone that counts.—Of these two, fate and human endeavour, the latter is the one to be depended upon, for the former is only inferential. The state relates to activity in this world and therefore *uthānam* or human endeavour should be the sure foundation of all state activity.

Now we may consider the last basic question we formulated, the relation of the individual to the state in Indian political thinking. We have already noticed that the state in India was all-embracing in its activity. There was no sphere except that of *dharma* which was excluded from its view. As an administering state it touched the life of every individual. Beyond the protection that *dharma* offered to him the individual had no rights against the state. The state was omnipotent, it had no 'estates'

<sup>1</sup> These three 'powers' are explained in the previous extract.—Ed.

to limit its activity or to resist its fiat. The protection that *dharma* afforded was to the community in general and not to the individual. The question of civil, political and religious rights, therefore, was not the subject of speculation and this was the main weakness of Hindu political thought. What was the Hindu conception of justice?—*Danḍa* is so called in order that the righteousness of the sovereign who is wide awake may not suffer extinction. *Danḍa* is [an aspect of] Viṣṇu, the protector. It is the permanent form of Divinity on earth.—[So answers the *Mahābhārata*.]—Justice [thus] is what binds society together and is the great protective principle, and secondly that economic prosperity, moral welfare and cultural advancement are dependent on justice [Says Manu]: 'The wise men know *Danḍa* to be *dharma*'.—There is one further idea which governs ancient Indian thinking in this matter. It is considered axiomatic, not requiring any arguments to establish it. It is that as an organ of *dharma* the state is subordinate to it. It is beyond the competence of the state to alter *dharma* and this operated as an effective limitation on what would otherwise have been a totalitarian conception. The right of the people to revolt against a sovereign who does not follow *dharma* is expressly laid down. If the sovereign be an enemy of *dharma* then the people should desert him as causing the ruin of the state, says Śukra. In the *Mahābhārata* it is laid down that a king who does not afford protection according to *dharma* 'should be slain by his combined subjects like a mad dog afflicted with rabies.'

Kautilya was much more than the theorist of the amoral state. His conception of the state was far beyond the limited imagination of Machiavelli, for he thought of the state as an organization which took within the range of its interests every sphere of human activity. In fact it was the prototype of the modern omnipotent administering state.



## 3

## HUMAN PERSONALITY AND POLITICS

V. P. VARMA<sup>1</sup>

According to the Hindu theories political power has been always conceived to be a means. Wealth and power are important values but spiritual realization and self-contemplation stand higher. Hindu writers always stress that force should not be the basis of political power but that the latter should have its foundations in discipline, self-restraint and the performance of the function for which power has been instituted.

There is a fundamental spiritual and moral note in Hindu thought which is surpassing in its proclamation of the sacred character of the individual human personality. . . . Man is not the materialistic-vitalistic agglomeration of physical and chemical elements or the temporary embodiment of a blind force. In his inmost essence man is a divine spark. This conception of the dignity and sanctity of the human soul was a cardinal tenet even of those political writers who taught a realistic aggrandizement of political power or preached the divinity of the king. . . . The superiority of the spirit to all the established engines of political power is a cardinal tenet which has always evoked the greatest adherence in India. This emphasis on spirituality and morality in Hindu political thought is a great contribution to world political thought.

## 4

ETHICS AND POLITICS: THE CLASSICAL  
HINDU VIEWK. SATCHIDANANDA MURTY<sup>2</sup>

The principle on which these two classes of books (*Arthaśāstra* and *Nītiśāstra*) seem to be based has been long ago sum-

<sup>1</sup> V. P. Varma, *Studies in Hindu Political Thought*, pp. 254-6.

<sup>2</sup> K. Satchidananda Murty, *The Indian Spirit*, pp. 226-9, portions omitted.

marized in *Māgha*: Success of oneself and injury to enemies (2.30). These books seem to have been composed by scholars who were practising politicians like Kautilya, or by mere theoreticians. Like the Stoics, the Christian Fathers and Burckhardt in the nineteenth century, some of them regarded politics itself as evil and could not see how he who wants to practise politics can remain good. On the other hand, some of them regarded power politics as a natural phenomenon and therefore saw no reason why something natural should be censured. It is possible that Kautilya, who was responsible for the building up of a mighty empire through the uprooting of an older dynasty and the welding of a number of small states, and who was constantly threatened by foreign invasions, should have preached the autonomy of politics from morality. It is also understandable that the *Niti* writers of the Middle Ages whose great desire was to see that a strong Hindu state emerged, should have preached the gospel of power. A new dynasty has to legitimize itself and win stability, and the first task of a newly formed empire would be the subjugation of the conquered peoples and the liquidation of the rebellious and the disgruntled.

Almost all conquerors, colonial powers, and founders of new dynasties have resorted to these methods. But the Hindu writers of the *Arthaśāstras* seem to be the first to theorize and validate these methods. To go into some details, Kautilya suggests that a prince should ingratiate himself with heretics, corporations, gods, rich widows, and merchants, but at the same time should rob them either by taxation or by direct seizure of properties. Poison, spies, and provocation must be used to control people who disturb peace. Through intrigue and assassination, by use of poison and magic, and by setting against one's rivals and enemies their own relatives, one can get rid of inconvenient persons and groups. By claiming that gods are associated with oneself, enemies should be discouraged and friends encouraged. Any means can be used for raising money. For instance, Kautilya suggests that by deceit an idol can be implanted in a lonely place and it can be announced that it is self-sprung and money can be made out of it.

For a discussion regarding the justification of these methods, we have, however, to turn to the *Mahābhārata*. In that book



while at most places a king is advised to follow *dharma* and rule in accordance with scriptures, considering himself to be the guardian of all the people, at other places it is laid down that a king cannot succeed unless he willingly practices duplicity, deceit, and ruthlessness.

This question however was raised in the *Mahābhārata* itself, if politics in itself is immoral why should one practise it? and how does it differ from other immoral activities like robbery, etc.? To this one type of answer says that a certain class of men, the Kṣatriyas, has the obligation to govern, fight, and conquer. Since this duty is imposed upon them by their very birth and by scripture, it is not immoral for the Kṣatriyas to fight and conquer. Another type of answer says that the king or the state is above morality and in the discharge of his obligations a ruler whether indulging in war or suppressing rebellions cannot sin. A third type of answer is much more drastic. It says that politics must be based on empirical knowledge and logic of facts; and scriptures have nothing to say in this matter. As life is more important than religious merit and as politics is after all acquisition of power, the weak virtuous man cannot succeed in politics and strength must be acquired by any means (*Sāntiparva*, 130; 142). Lastly, it is also shown that the nature of existence itself is a struggle for survival and since everything in the world is desired by a number of men there is bound to be a struggle. Like everything else power must be fought for and won. In some places it is said that immoral means must be used only against immoral persons, or when it is not possible to preserve oneself in power through moral means.

Nowhere in the classical Hindu books do we find the idea that evil must be tolerated, or that evil must not be resisted. The only two positions with regard to politics which we find in classical Hindu books are these: It is impossible to be wholly moral in politics, but since man cannot be without political life, at least certain men are destined to participate in politics. For such men it is not a sin to strive for power, win it, and preserve it. For securing these ends they might have to resort to means which are conventionally regarded as immoral, but because it is necessary for certain men to be in politics, they beget no sin. In contrast to this we find the other view which

holds that politics and morality have no connection with each other, that political ends must be obtained only by political means and that these are amoral. It is very curious that no classical Hindu thinker regarded it as possible to moralize statecraft. Either one should choose to be in it and ignore ethics, or if one wholly wants to be ethical he must remain aloof from statecraft.<sup>1</sup>

## 5

## FORMS OF ANCIENT INDIAN STATES

K. P. JAYASWAL<sup>2</sup>*Republican Theories*

These data indirectly prove the existence of well-considered philosophic bases on which republican constitutions were founded. . . . They were not unconscious, instinctive institutions. . . . The evidence of the *Catus-Śatika* of Āryadeva establishes that the elected ruler in a *Gaṇa* was regarded as a servant of the *Gaṇa* (*gaṇa-dāsa*). The same principle is declared by Kṛṣṇa in the discussion cited in the *Mahābhārata*. 'It is the servant's duty (*dāśya*) which I have to perform under the name of rulership (*Aiśvarya-Vādena*).'

The Kāthas and the Saubhutas<sup>3</sup> regarded the individual as a mere part of the state. By himself he did not exist. Hence they claimed an absolute right over the child born to individuals. It is evident that other republics did not subscribe to this view. They, as evidenced by coins, take *gaṇa*, the government, as distinct from the community; the individual is not lost in the state. At the same time the unity between the two is so complete that the two are very nearly identical. The extreme case

<sup>1</sup> Hindu theoreticians permit amoral means only when they are necessary and only against other states and rival aspirers for political power within one's own state. A ruler ought not to use them against his people, all his dealings with them ought to be governed by morality and his supreme end must always be their happiness and welfare.

<sup>2</sup> K. P. Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity*, Vol. I, pp. 172-4, 188-9, 152, 190-1; Vol. II, 195-200.

<sup>3</sup> These were small republican peoples.—Ed.



of individualism on the other hand, was the theory of the *Arājaka* state, the no-ruler-state. Government itself was regarded by the theorists of that class of state as an evil. No one was vested with executive power. Only law was to rule, and the only sanction they prescribed for one found guilty of crime was ostracism. The sovereignty of the individual was not to be delegated to any one man or a body of men. Of course, a state founded on such a basis, to be practical, must have been exceedingly small. Such states, however, did exist in Hindu India as noticed in [a] *Jainasūtra*. The monarchist may very well exclaim: 'No Government is more miserable than the *Arājaka* Government. If a powerful citizen obeys the [law] it is all well, but if he rebels, he can work total destruction.'

And the monarchists may very well pick up the *Arājaka* theory from the republicans to justify their own theory of monarchy. But they could not ignore the *Arājaka* theory of Social Contract as the primary basis of state. On the basis of a mutual contract amongst the citizens, according to the *Arājaka* democrats, the state was founded. This, of course, was true of the *Arājaka* state. When the monarchists postulate a contract between the king and the people (to take office on condition to rule honestly and to receive taxes in return) they clearly say that this contract was resorted to when the contract of the *Arājaka* constitution failed in practical working. Here we find the monarchists really adopting the social contract theory originally postulated by the *Arājakas*. Probably a theory of social contract was common to all classes of republics. Its counterpart, applied to monarchy, was already known to Kautilya as an accepted truth.

### *Character of Hindu Monarchy*

The state under monarchy in the eyes of the Hindu was a trust. The object of the trust is clearly stated in the Śrīti text which had to be repeated at every Coronation: 'This State to Thee [is given]—Thou art the director, regulator, firm bearer [of this responsibility]—for [the good of] agriculture, for well being, for prosperity, for growth [of the people], [that is] for success'. . . . The trust, the state, thus created was for the prosperity of the people. It is this underlying principle which has been expressed in later literature in so many forms, culminating in the fixed

maxim that the king is the servant of the people getting his wages. If the object of the trust is not fulfilled, the trustee is 'to be shunned like a leaky ship on the sea'.

The Hindu monarchical state was essentially a civil state. Standing armies appear as early as the sixth century BC and probably had existed before it for some centuries. At times very large armies, three-quarters of a million strong, were maintained. But the state never lapsed into a military polity. The governors of the provinces were civil officers. All the known orders in inscriptions are addressed to civil functionaries. The Commander-in-Chief and all other military chiefs were appointed by the Council of State where the Commander-in-Chief had no place. We do not find the army making and unmaking kings. All the traditions of depositions, e.g. that of Nāga-Darśaka, of Pālaka, or of the early Veṇa, relate dethronement brought about by the citizens of the capital and other constituents of the civil population, not by the army.

There was the all-powerful Law, the Common Law of the Hindus, which is declared again and again to be above the king and as the king of kings. In *Manu* the king is made liable to be fined. His powers and obligations are defined in the law-sūtras and law-books as part and parcel of the law (in chapters on Constitutional Law, the *Rājadharmā* or 'Laws for Kings'). Even in the palmiest days of Hindu monarchy, neither in the *Mānava-Dharmaśāstra* nor in the *Arthaśāstra*, was the king placed above the law. He could make new laws according to the *Arthaśāstra*, according to *Manu* he could not do so; but when he could make laws he passed only regulatory laws and not laws substantive or laws making him arbitrary.

Laws of war and conquest were incorporated into the Civil Law as one of its limbs—so much so that the question of conquest was often discussed from the point of view of municipal law, the standard being the standard of the morality of law. If a state was conquered its government was to be re-entrusted into the hands of the old ruling house. . . . In the . . . palmiest days of Hindu history, the theory existed in the form noticed by the Greek writers with regard to Hindu attitude to foreign politics. Arrian drawing upon Megasthenes records in his *Indika* (IX). 'Sense of Justice', they [Hindus] say, 'prevented any Indian King from attempting conquest beyond the limits of India.'



*Ancient Pan-Indian Systems*

Ādhipatya in its technical sense evidently signifies an overlordship embracing protected states. . . . [It] thus seems to mean an imperial system in which suzerainty or 'over-protection' (*Ādhipatya*) on states outside its frontiers was exercised by the dominant state. . . . The wish to be a *Sārvabhauma* is expressed to become '[the sole] monarch of the land up to its [natural] frontiers, up to the sea, over all human beings'. This is a variety of large monarchy which is based on territory as opposed to nationality (e.g., *Janarājya* of the *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa*). It however claims the whole area (*sarva-bhūmi*) within natural boundaries, the country with 'natural frontiers' . . . [i.e.] the imperial field as lying between Cape Comorin and the Himālayas, i.e., the whole of India.

*Sāmrājya* indicates a 'collection of states' under one acknowledged super-state. In modern phraseology it was a Federal Imperial system. . . . We detect an inter-state basis of originally free nature. In the first book of the *Mahābhāratha* we actually find a free election of an emperor by a collection of kings and his consecration to that position.

The *sārvabhauma* system began to take shape about 700 BC when the national states began to give way. This type of Hindu Imperialism was also known as 'Cakravartin-system'. It has reference to 'the arena where the imperial wheel moved unobstructed'. The basic idea again is territory. In the place of the old 'up-to-ocean' limit it substituted a new definition—from Cape Comorin to Kashmir. . . . 'Conquest', 'Conquest', 'nothing but Conquest', and to create oneness by that Conquest, was the breath of the eastern Hindus in 600–500 BC. . . . The system, meant development of a tremendous power, but it was a power attained under intoxication. The after-effect was sinking into exhaustion.

The great feature of the Magadha imperialism was its centralization. Justice had become royal, even law tended to be royal. The village came under the royal officer. All ships were owned and let by the state. Virtues alone did not come under the focus of the Crown, also vices were brought under the imperial vigilance. Prostitutes were placed under a royal department, gambling was centralized in government buildings or

buildings licensed by government, hotels and wine shops were put under an imperial department. Mines were monopolized, or to quote the old phrase, brought under one outlet (*ekamukha*).

## 6

## THE ESSENCE OF INDIAN POLITY

SRI AUROBINDO<sup>1</sup>

The right order of human life as of the universe is preserved according to the ancient Indian idea by each individual being following faithfully his *svadharma*, the true law and norm of his nature and the nature of his kind and by the group being, the organic collective life, doing likewise. The family, clan, caste, class, social, religious, industrial or other community, nation, people are all organic group beings that evolve their own *dharma* and to follow it is the condition of their preservation, healthy continuity, sound action. There is also the *dharma* of the position, the function, the particular relation with others, as there is too the *dharma* imposed by the condition, environment, age, *yugadharma*, the universal religious or ethical *dharma*, and all these acting on the natural *dharma*, the action according to the *svabhāva*, create the body of the Law.

The main function of the political sovereign, the king and council and the other ruling members of the body politic, was therefore to serve and assist the maintenance of the sound law of life of the society: the sovereign was the guardian and administrator of the *dharma*. . . . All the members and groups of the socio-political body had their *dharma* determined for them by their nature, their position, their relation to the whole body and must be assured and maintained in the free and right exercise of it, must be left to their own natural and self-determined functioning within their own bounds, but at the same time restrained from any transgression, encroachment or deviation from their right working and true limits. That was the office of the supreme political authority, the sovereign in his council aided by the public assemblies. It was not the business of the

<sup>1</sup> Sri Aurobindo, *The Foundations of Indian Culture*, pp. 386-9, 417, 419.



state authority to interfere with or encroach upon the free functioning of the caste, religious community, guild, village, township or the organic custom of the region or province or to abrogate their rights, for these were inherent because necessary to the sound exercise of the social *dharma*. All that it was called upon to do was to co-ordinate, to exercise a general and supreme control, to defend the life of the community against external attack or internal disruption, to repress crime and disorder, to assist, promote and regulate in its larger lines the economic and industrial welfare, to see to the provision of facilities, and to use for these purposes the powers that passed beyond the scope of the others.

Thus in effect the Indian polity was the system of a very complex communal freedom and self-determination, each group unit of the community having its own natural existence and administering its own proper life and business, set off from the rest by a natural demarcation of its field and limits, but connected with the whole by well-understood relations, each a co-partner with the others in the powers and duties of the communal existence, executing its own laws and rules, administering within its own proper limits, joining with the others in the discussion and the regulation of matters of a mutual or common interest and represented in some way and to the degree of its importance in the general assemblies of the kingdom or empire. The state, sovereign or supreme political authority was an instrument of co-ordination and of a general control and efficiency and exercised a supreme but not an absolute authority; for in all its rights and powers it was limited by the Law and by the will of the people and in all its internal functions only a co-partner with the other members of the socio-political body.—This was the theory and principle and the actual constitution of the Indian polity.

The ancient mind of India had the intuition of its need; its idea of empire was a uniting rule that respected every existing regional and communal liberty, that unnecessarily crushed out no living autonomy, that effected a synthesis of her life and not a mechanical oneness. Afterwards the conditions under which such a solution might securely have evolved and found its true means and form and basis, disappeared and there was instead an attempt to establish a single administrative empire. That en-

deavour, dictated by the pressure of an immediate and external necessity, failed to achieve a complete success in spite of its greatness and splendour. It could not do so because it followed a trend that was not eventually compatible with the true turn of the Indian spirit.—The failure to achieve Indian unity of which the invasions and the final subjection to the foreigner were the consequence, arose therefore at once from the magnitude and from the peculiarity of the task, because the easy method of a centralized empire could not truly succeed in India, while yet it seemed the only device possible and was attempted again and again with a partial success that seemed for the time and a long time to justify it, but always with an eventual failure.<sup>1</sup>

## 7

## THE UNIVERSAL RELEVANCE OF INDIAN POLITICAL PRECEPTS AND PRACTICES

R. BHASKARAN<sup>2</sup>

### *The Present Predicament of Western Political Science*

The great and sudden changes that began assailing the Western world in our century were not foreseen by political scientists who believed the development of European polity pointed to a distant federation of the continent and that the internal problem of the State was the growth of collectivism as a consequence of the extension of the franchise. . . . The first world war was therefore an occurrence which no one knew enough to prevent or limit. Its extent and scope were evidence of the development in technology, industry and finance which students of political science and of international relations had not then observed with any attention. So at the end of the war political scientists re-examined sovereignty often in the light of medieval experience of plural societies, re-examined representative democracy in

<sup>1</sup> According to Aurobindo, the Maurya and its successor empires distintegrated because they did not naturally and steadily evolve; they were too much centralized and destroyed regional autonomies, and falling from the high ideals of *dharma* they resorted to Machiavellian statecraft.—Editor.

<sup>2</sup> R. Bhaskaran, *The Indian Year Book of International Affairs*, Vol. I.



order to discover economic rather than territorial constituencies, and also began to consider the issues raised by the organization of an international body like the League of Nations. But political leaders in mass democracies were in the grip of large unthinking electorates and the dream of a new peaceful world was not realized. In the interwar period political scientists chronicled and analysed the rise of totalitarianisms of the Right and the Left and were divided among themselves and became more and more partisan. The liberal epoch had ended; failure of the League of Nations, conceived by a political scientist who became President of the USA made academic political science sceptical of democratic and constitutional mechanisms for the settlement of disputes among nations; the collapse of democracy in many civilized states called for a basic revision of the principles of their science. The second world war has done little to alter the situation which is only more serious and very much much more complicated than it was a generation ago.

Obviously the remedy is to examine and restate the fundamental principles of political science and of international relations, or, if it is discovered that there had been so far no such principles at all, to formulate them afresh. Here the real question is whether such formulation or restatement should be relevant to the circumstances of our time. A political scientist after the first war insisted that the new age demanded a new political science. . . . But do values change with time? . . . In the face of the fatal objection once raised by Lord Keynes that in the long run we shall all be dead, it was found impossible to introduce eternal or at least fairly permanent values into the appraisal of current situations or the decisions flowing therefrom. Mankind is in a hurry and social scientists are not immune to the dominant urges of the day. Therefore, since a deliberate formulation of first principles is now neither practicable nor likely to be of immediate use, the social scientists turn to the physical scientists and technologists who have perfected tools and techniques of observation and analysis and try to use similar means in their own field. . . . All the social sciences including the political took to a statistical escape from their old moral responsibility. If political science is indeed the science of who-gets-what-when, there is no better method. Verification is the essence of science and all the old problems of the relation of man to society and

societies to one another are susceptible of fresh analysis on these lines. When properly analysed they should yield incontrovertible results. There is however an obstacle imposed by established habits of thought and speech which reflect unscientific or pre-scientific attitudes, and so a careful study of semantics is an indispensable preliminary to the new approach to social science. . . . No one with a scientific turn of mind can fail to be impressed by the revolutionary potentialities of an application of statistics, semantics and psychology to the study of human society. Every political and international issue is capable of being viewed in an objective and strictly rational and so truly scientific way. But it is a question whether such a view can lead to universal agreement among people who are not already parties to a contract of scientific approach. Again the universal agreement following a scientific demonstration should determine the conduct of men and the behaviour of nations.

*Can Indian Experience suggest a solution?*

An Indian political scientist understanding the Western situation to be somewhat like what has been so far set forth, may turn to the precepts and practice of his own country for any guidance it can offer. It is for instance well known that ancient Indian society was wholly based on status determined by birth. In such a society with its own sanctions for the observance of its ancient rules the state had never attained the sovereignty of the European nation state and the Indian counterparts to the mechanisms of the police state, the welfare state or the new 'garrison state' are either absent or devised on the basis of community, not on a territorial political organization. . . . Such historical habits and traditions preclude the use of individualism or the subsequent integration of individuals into the political society of the state. The fairly frequent incursion of foreign conquerors did not alter the structure of Indian society or its outlook till the English established their administration here and taught the people Western notions of politics. Even then while a small fraction of the educated classes accepted these doctrines and have finally adopted the most advanced western views—man and society as a whole have not been significantly changed. The political scientist can still see here a society where authority is so to say held in solution, not concentrated in the



political mechanism as in the West. This can be a pointer to a new, realistic and also time-tested pattern of human relationship in a stable society. It has also obvious application in the field of international relations. Suzerainty or paramountcy in India never for long involved the direct governance of subject territories, nor the establishment of organized administrative hierarchies. It was no doubt a 'closed system' of social philosophy that governed the attitudes and actions of persons, communities and kingdoms, but it was a tolerant system which while it imagined many worlds and many systems in the cosmos, did not cultivate any impulse to conquer other worlds and destroy other systems. The habit of regarding everything *sub specie aeternitatis*, a practice which annoys modern man, can become the ingrained habit of large masses of men as the history of India shows, and such a habit is essential for a permanent practice of tolerance at home and abroad which again is indispensable if the human community is to be saved from the perpetual strife of domestic politics and international. . . . There are thoughtful men in the West who see behind all these problems a certain failure of proper articulation in their industrial mass society. . . . A cure might be sought by applying the science so far directed at nature to man himself; we may also seek enlightenment in the older sciences of man, God and society whose cultivation had been neglected in the recent past in favour of the natural sciences. . . . A residual fear still haunting the progressive mind is that any deep interest in the spiritual significance of man and society might be the beginning of a regress to dogmatic religion and a repudiation at once of science and civilization. West European history seems to justify this fear to some extent but Indian experience provides on the other hand considerable reassurance. Just as political and social beliefs can be pervasive and effective indefinitely by being diffused among large masses of people, spiritual and religious convictions too can in the same manner permeate human societies and be wholly beneficial for long periods of time. It is excessive organization or concentration in either case that makes for tension and conflict, causes revolutions and wars and exhaustion and impoverishment in the end. . . . The real remedy for the disease of organization and concentration is not more or either, but less. The sort of pleasant and practicable anarchy that Gandhi preached in every

context is the kernel of the 'third way' that India would like the world to examine and accept. The Indian political scientist cannot ignore it in his observation of domestic or international affairs. In the ideological conflict steadily severing humanity into two repelling halves political science need not teach us to choose our side or merely to justify our choice with a show of reason, for such service is quite superfluous. Its real mission lies, as it did in the remote past, in demonstrating the possibility of peaceful and civilized life for all men in a society where there is no need for coercive authority and the display of physical force is forgotten. The world has room for any number of such societies and as they will not be nation-states, in the posture of gladiators in the world arena, their relations to one another would be, even as the relations of persons within each society, humane, and would call for no political organization requiring a concentration of power.



## B

# PATHS TO FREEDOM

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## I

### FREEDOM THROUGH ORDERED PROGRESS

(*'One of India's earliest efforts at freedom'*, writes M. R. Jayakar, *'proved by the authentic testimony of writers, Indian as well as British, was in the year 1857.'* India then *'made a heroic endeavour to throw off the British yoke'* and obtain freedom for itself, but the movement was confined to only Hindu and Muslim princes and military classes, and so the British could quell it. (Jayakar, *The Story of My Life*, Vol. I, p. VII-VIII.) About half a century of contact with England and the introduction of English education from 1835, familiarized Indians with British conceptions of liberty and parliamentary democracy. Dadabhai Naoroji (1825-1917) discovered England was draining away Indian wealth and degrading and sapping Indian manhood. He started agitating for Indians being granted the same rights and privileges which people in Britain enjoyed. Mahadev Govind Ranade (1842-1901) started a movement for social reform among the Hindus, and pleaded for rapid economic development and eradication of poverty. Surendranath Banerjee (1848-1926) propagated the idea of an united India *'bound in this treble chain of (mutual) love, sympathy and esteem'*. The Indian National Congress founded in 1885 gave a direction, definite purpose and constitutional form to India's desire for independence. Till about 1905, the Congress was dominated by the *'Liberals'* or the *'Moderates'*, who believed Indo-British relationship providentially came about to train Indians for self-government. Through co-operation with the British in their task of preparing India for self-government, and resort to constitutional methods of persuasion, agitation and repeated forcible voicing of demands, they hoped to be granted freedom by Britain. They had faith in progress, reason, British justice and democracy, and believed history was working towards Indian self-rule within the British Commonwealth. The liberals stood for individual liberty, democracy, economic well-being and self-sufficiency of the nation, and social progress. Gopal Krishna Gokhale (1866-1915) was the most important of the liberals, while Ranade was perhaps the first formulator of their creed. The Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri

(1869-1946) was a famous orator and humanist. Gokhale was Gandhi's political guru, while Sastri was one of his life-long friends. Some of India's greatest intellectuals like Sir T. B. Sapru, Dr. M. R. Jayakar, Pandit Madana Mohan Malaviya, Hasan Imam, and M. A. N. Hydari, were liberals.—Editor.)

#### A. M. G. Ranade<sup>1</sup>

Liberalism and moderation will be [our] watchwords. The spirit of liberalism implies a freedom from race and creed prejudices and a steady devotion to all that seeks to do justice between man and man, giving to the rulers their loyalty due to the law that they are bound to administer, but securing at the same time to the people the equality which is their right under the law. Moderation implies the conditions of never vainly aspiring after the impossible or after the remote ideals, but striving each day to take the next step in the order of the national growth that lies nearest to our hands in a spirit of compromise and friendship.—The reformer must attempt to deal with the whole man and not to carry out reform on one side only. . . . You cannot have a good social system when you find yourself low in the scale of political rights; nor can you be fit to exercise political rights unless your social system is based on reason and justice. You cannot have a good economical system, when your social arrangements are imperfect. If your religious ideas are low and grovelling you cannot succeed in social, economical and political spheres. This interdependence is not an accident but it is the law of our nature.—There are those among us who think that the work of the reformer is confined only to a brave resolve to break with the past, and do what his own individual reason suggests as proper and fitting. The power of long-formed habits and tendencies is ignored in this view of the matter. . . . The true reformer has not to write on a clean slate. His work is more often to complete the half-written sentence.

#### B. S. N. Banerjee<sup>2</sup>

We live in an era of unexampled peace, prosperity and happiness. For this great result, we are indebted to the British

<sup>1</sup> *Modern Indian Political Tradition*, edited by K. P. Karunakaran, p. 10; R. C. Majumdar, et al., *An Advanced History of India*, p. 882.

<sup>2</sup> *Modern Indian Political Tradition*, edited by K. P. Karunakaran, pp. 34-5, 45-8.



Government. . . . If, at this moment, happily the sentiment of brotherhood has been universally evoked in the minds of the Indian races, it is because under the auspices of British rule, the varied and diversified peoples that inhabit this great country have been welded together into a compact and homogeneous mass.—It is England which has created in us those political aspirations, the fruition of which we now claim. Our minds are steeped in the literature of the West. Our souls have been stirred by the great models of public virtue which the pages of English history so freely present.—They have taught us the principle of adaptation to the environments of our situation, and they must not complain, if we, as their apt pupils, invite them to reduce to practice what they enforce by precept. We have no higher aspiration than that we should be admitted into the great confederacy of self-governing states, of which England is the august mother. We recognize that the journey towards the destined goal must necessarily be slow and that the blessed consummation can only be attained after prolonged preparation and laborious apprenticeship. . . . The present system of government necessarily represents a transition. All history proclaims the truth that autocratic power is devoid of the elements of permanence and that authority to be permanent must be planted deep in the affections of the people and derive its sustaining breath from the vitalizing springs of popular enthusiasm. The voice of the people is the voice of God; and the right divine to rule is based on the unchangeable foundations of the love, the gratitude, the devotion of a people, evoked by the consciousness that they share with their rulers the responsibilities of government. Despotism represents a stage of transition, the period of which should not be unnecessarily prolonged. But transition must give place to permanence.

### C. *Dadabhai Naoroji*<sup>1</sup>

We want only justice. . . . The whole matter can be compromised in one word—'Self-Government' or *Swarāj* like that of the United Kingdom or the Colonies.—For India also, there can be no national greatness, strength and hope except by the right political principles of self-government.—I hope to see a loyal,

<sup>1</sup> *Modern Indian Political Tradition*, edited by K. P. Karunakaran, pp. 55, 66–7, 69.

honest, honourable and conscientious adoption of the policy for self-government for India.—As the Moral Law, the greatest force of the Universe, has it—in our good will be England's own greatest good.—While we put the duty of leading us on to self government on the heads of the present British statesmen, we have also the duty upon ourselves to do all we can to support those statesmen by, on the one hand, preparing our Indian people for the right understanding, exercise and enjoyment of self-government and, on the other hand, of convincing the British people that we justly claim and must have all British rights.—Agitation is the life and soul of the whole political, social and industrial history of England. It is by agitation the English have accomplished their most glorious achievements, their prosperity, their liberties and, in short, their first place among the nations of the world.—Agitation is the civilized, peaceful weapon of moral force, and infinitely preferable to brute physical force when possible.

D. G. K. Gokhale<sup>1</sup>

India should be governed in the interests of the Indian themselves, and, in course of time, a form of government should be attained in this country similar to what exists in the self-governing colonies of the British Empire. For better, or for worse, our destinies are now linked with those of England, and the Congress freely recognizes that whatever advance we seek must be within the Empire itself. That advance, moreover, can only be gradual, as at each stage of the progress it may be necessary for us to pass through a brief course of apprenticeship before we are enabled to the next one; for it is a reasonable proposition that the sense of responsibility, required for the proper exercise of the political institutions of the West, can be acquired by an Eastern people through practical training and experiment only.—The resources of the country should be primarily devoted to the work of qualifying the people by means of education and in other ways for such advance.

The domination of one race over another—especially when there is no great disparity between the intellectual endowments of their general civilization—inflicts great injury on the subject

<sup>1</sup> *Modern Indian Political Tradition*, edited by K. P. Karunakaran, pp. 99–101, 95.



race in a thousand insidious ways. On the moral side, the present situation is steadily destroying our capacity for initiative and dwarfing us as men of action. On the material side, it has resulted in a fearful impoverishment of the people.

*Boycott:* A weapon like this must be reserved only for extreme occasions. There are obvious risks involved in its failure and it cannot be used with sufficient effectiveness, unless there is an extraordinary upheaval of popular feeling behind it. It is bound to rouse angry passions on the other side, and no true well-wisher of his country will be responsible for provoking such passions, except under an overpowering sense of necessity. On an extreme occasion, of course, a boycotting demonstration is perfectly legitimate, but that occasion must be one to drive all the classes, as in Bengal, to act with one impulse, and make all leaders sink their personal differences in the presence of a common danger.

E. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri<sup>1</sup>

The joys of freedom are indeed difficult to describe; they can only be fully appreciated by those who have had the misfortune to lose them for a time. . . . What a man has fought for and won he must without reserve or qualification share with his fellowmen. Sanitarians preach that you can never enjoy the best health in your house till your surroundings are also well developed in the matter of hygiene. Philosophers tell us that you can best seek your own happiness only by serving for the happiness of others. So I believe no man will enjoy to the fullest measure the blessings of freedom unless he shares them to the full with his fellowmen. . . . Like culture, like knowledge, like virtue and like spiritual merit, freedom is a thing which, the more it is given the more it grows. He who would circumscribe freedom to particular areas and to certain peoples knows not what he is doing, for he is taking away from humanity a possible contribution to its richness and glory, a contribution which I take it to be the will of Providence that every race, every people should make in its own good time. [So Britain must share her freedom with India.]

Our extremist countrymen complain that we have merged

<sup>1</sup> Quoted from *A Political Biography* by P. Kodanda Rao, pp. 106-7, 133-4, 195, 199, 344, 359-60.

ourselves in the bureaucracy and must be held responsible for their blunders, high-handedness and repression. Our answer must be firm and frank. So long as they will proclaim war on the established government, talk openly of revolution, inculcate disloyalty and rash political action, . . . we must sternly disapprove and stoutly oppose. Our business is to promote our country's welfare, to enlarge her political status through the present Constitution, to secure her ordered progress, and compatibly with these aims, but not otherwise, to support Government. . . . We will oppose and thwart them when they neglect their duty or defy our wishes. . . . As our motto is Ordered Progress, we do not despise compromise in public affairs, provided it is honourable, advances the present position and does not bar further progress. . . . If we destroy the present fabric, which is by no means perfect but which is capable of continual adaptation to better, finer issues, . . . shall we out of our own traditional aptitudes erect a similar fabric on the ruin? I dare not promise myself that, and that is why I hesitated and will hesitate again and again before I join any movement which has the tendency to overthrow, the tendency to disestablish, the tendency to bring about a state of anarchy in the country, the tendency which destroys law, the tendency which destroys order and ordered government. . . . Refusing to surrender all relations with government and not seeking the jail as the only place for an honest man, we have appeared seekers of petty material advantages and lukewarm patriots in comparison with the adherents of a new school which erects politics into a religion and speaks of merit and sin where the common man would speak of expediency and inexpediency.

Is this the time, when the National Congress itself has by universal consent returned to the constitutional method of political strategy, is this the moment for Gandhi, who has actively blessed this return to constitutional methods and not merely passively acquiesced in it, is this the moment for him to put this question?<sup>1</sup> And then, is it right, I ask, for the progenitor for the first time in the history of the political world, as he says, of a new method of peaceful political warfare, possibly bloodless and quite legitimate and honourable, is it for him to

<sup>1</sup> The question was, was freedom ever attained by constitutional methods?  
—Ed.



demand that the verdict of history should be sought? . . . This is an unfortunate world where so many profound and widespread wrongs have thriven for long ages. If a man is to go to jail because there is some wrong around him, he can never come out of it. . . . In this world the only place where a man can call his soul his own is the jail. Once you go there you are divested of your responsibilities. Somebody else takes charge of you. . . . In other words, by getting into jail, by depriving yourself of your freedom, by putting yourself entirely under the authority and direction of other people, you cease morally to be responsible for the evils around you. . . . It is when trouble is acute, when the difficulties are greatest, that is to say, though it seems hard to say it, when the Constitution is the worst, it is then that the duty of the citizen to perform all his functions is most strong. If I realize my duty, it is just the time when I should not close my eyes, when I should not fold my arms, and when I should not shut up my brain in inactivity. It is a challenge to whatever is best, most active and most efficient in me.

## 2

## FREEDOM THROUGH PASSIVE RESISTANCE

*(Bankimchandra Chatterjee (1838-94) formulated the concept of Mother India, identified her with the Hindu goddess Kālī, and helped to create a passionate religio-patriotic cult. Dayananda Saraswati (1824-83) and Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902) declared the religion based on the Vedas and Upaniṣads to be perfect and universal. Lord Curzon's partition of Bengal caused deep resentment and provoked unexpected rousing of violent nationalist sentiments. That was a cutting of Mother India, it was felt. The method of boycott of British goods and 'passive resistance' modelled after the Sinn Féin movement in Ireland came into vogue in protest against the partition. Tilak thought Hinduism was the oldest and most comprehensive religion, vindicated by modern science and destined to spread all over the world. He organized Gaṇapāti festivals to promote Hindu nationalism and held up Shivaji as the ideal hero. He declared liberty was one's birthright and it was one's duty to attain it. Aurobindo Ghosh (1872-1950) proclaimed that nationalism was not a mere political programme, but 'came from God'. He theorized about passive resistance. Violence, strife and destruction, he said, are as much universal principles as love, creation and co-*

operation. It is impossible to develop and fulfil oneself and still to 'observe really and utterly the principle of harmlessness'. By abstaining from strife too one may cause as much destruction as by resort to violence. 'Evil cannot perish without the destruction of much that lives by evil.' In view of its after-effects and the retributive action it may unleash, the use of soul-force against violence may be less merciful than the use of sword and cannon. On the other hand, unwillingness and incapacity to resist evil cannot abrogate 'the law of strife and destruction'. 'Love itself', wrote Aurobindo, 'has been constantly a power of death.' (Essays on the Gita, Vol. I, pp. 55-61). The attitude of these people called 'the extremists' is brought out in the following selections from Tilak, Aurobindo, and Bipin Chandra Pal (1858-1932) who sought to combine Hegelianism, Vedānta and nationalism. The extremists sought to attain national freedom by any means, including armed revolt, and since that was not possible, and as constitutional methods failed, they resorted to boycott and passive resistance. To use only goods produced in India (swadeshi), to avoid foreign goods, to receive an education in tune with Hindu culture and ideals, to abstain from government schools and colleges, and to have nothing to do with the bureaucracy of the government—in short, 'self-development and defensive resistance' (Aurobindo)—this was the common programme acceptable to all extremists.—Editor).

#### A. B. G. Tilak<sup>1</sup>

There is no example in the whole range of history of a foreign government, which has established its right by conquest, giving complete or a large measure of self-government to the people at its own instance. It is not in human nature to do so. The rulers look to their own interest, not that of the ruled. Philanthropy has no part in politics. . . . It is impossible to expect that our petitions will be heard unless backed by firm resolution. . . . Three 'P's—pray, please and protest—will not do unless backed by solid force. Look to the examples of Ireland, Japan and Russia and follow their methods.

One thing is granted, viz. that this government does not suit us. As has been said by an eminent statesman—the government of one country by another can never be a successful, and therefore, a permanent government. There is no difference of opinion about this fundamental proposition between the Old and New Schools. One fact is that this alien government has ruined the

<sup>1</sup> *Modern Indian Political Tradition*, edited by K. P. Karunakaran, pp. 153, 151, 155, 165-6, 164, 161-2.



country. . . . We want to change this state of affairs. We want some better arrangement for our government. That is why we demand *swarājya*, that is Home Rule. . . . These rules and regulations [of the government] may or may not be good. They may be good, they may be well-planned and carefully thought out. I do not suggest they are not. But, however good may be the law made by an alien people, it is not likely to win the approval of a nation which wants to decide its own destiny.

To give authority into people's hand is the best principle of administration. No one disputes this; this principle prevails in the country of our rulers. They can, therefore, hardly dispute that this historical principle is bad. Then what is bad? They say that the Indians are not today fit for *swarājya*. But why are we not fit? The answer is because we have not been given the opportunity to become fit. . . . It is frequently suggested by the British that they have come to India to teach Indians how to govern themselves. Let us admit this for the sake of argument. But how long will you go on teaching us? we ask. For one generation, two generations, or three generations? Is there any end to our education? We say, set some limit. You cannot go on teaching us for ever.

When *swarājya* is spoken of, it implies that there is some kind of rule opposed to *swa*, i.e. ours. This is plain. When such a condition is reached it begins to be thought that there should be *swarājya*, and men make exertions for that purpose. We are at present in that sort of condition. Those who are ruling over us do not belong to our religion, race, or even country. The question whether the rule of the British Government is good or bad is one thing. The question of 'one's own' and 'alien' is quite another. Do not confuse the two issues.

We are not armed, and there is no necessity for arms either. We have a stronger weapon, a political weapon, in boycott. We have perceived one fact, that the whole of this administration, which is carried on by a handful of Englishmen, is carried on with our assistance. . . . What the new Party wants you to do is to realize the fact that your future rests entirely in your own hands. If you mean to be free, you can be free; if you do not mean to be free, you will fall and be for ever fallen. So, many of you need not like arms; but if you have not power of active resistance, have you not the power of self-denial and self-

abstinence in such a way as not to assist this foreign government to rule over you? This is boycott, and this is what is meant when we say, boycott is a political weapon. We shall not give them assistance to collect revenue and keep peace. We shall not assist them in fighting beyond the frontiers or outside India with Indian blood and money. We shall not assist them in carrying on the administration of justice.

I consider armed revolt also constitutional. The only difficulty is, at present it is not possible. If anyone were to assure me that armed revolt would be successful to the extent of even eight annas in the rupee, I would start the revolt, trusting God to give me success to the extent of the remaining eight annas.

Non-violence, Satyāgraha, fasting etc.—are more in keeping with Jaina teachings than the Hindu religion. But these means are of no use in politics.—Exalted religious principles or abstract doctrines about truth are not of much value in the present political game. I don't think that Satyāgraha and Fasting will have the least effect upon the mind of our rulers who are adepts in political warfare. We must use against them the same means as they use against us and as their tactics change, so must ours.<sup>1</sup>

#### B. B. C. Pal<sup>2</sup>

Constitutional government is that which organizes the state machinery, in which there are recognized organs, through which the opinions of the people may apply themselves on the work of the government. . . . Constitutional governments are governments that allow, by their very constitution, every right to the people to assert their opinions and ideas effectively upon those who govern. . . . Have we any such rights? . . . If we have no such right, . . . how then can we say that the government of India is a constitutional government?

We respect the laws and we shall respect the laws of the present government as long as those laws respect the primary rights of citizenship. There are certain rights which governments do not create, but rights which created governments

<sup>1</sup> Bal Gangadhar Tilak, from reminiscences of Tilak by S. V. Bapat, cited by M. R. Jayakar, *The Story of My Life*, Vol. I, pp. 386-7.

<sup>2</sup> *Modern Indian Political Tradition*, edited by K. P. Karunakaran, pp. 202-8, 211-3.



themselves. Those are not constitutional rights. They are not created rights. They are natural rights. They are primary rights, rights that inhere to every individual human being, rights the charter of which is received from no man but from Him who stands on high, who endowed every man with his life, with his limbs, who endowed every man with his intellect and every spiritual and ethical endowment. The charter of these rights comes not from any crowned head, but it comes from the King of Kings, from the throne of God himself. And so long as the British Government in India will respect those natural, those primary, those uncreated rights of persons and property of individual Indian citizens, so long we shall respect their laws, and our agitation shall be conducted along such lines.

Our faces have turned now to the starving, the naked, the patient and long-suffering 300 millions of Indian people, and in it we see a new potency, because we view them now with an eye of love which we never had felt before, and in the teeming, toiling, starving and naked populations of India, we find possibilities, potentialities, germs that have given rise to this new movement. That is the cornerstone of this movement, namely, faith in the people, faith in the genius of the nation, faith in God who has been guiding the genius of this nation through ages by historical evolution, faith in the eternal destiny of the Indian people. With the decadence of our faith in the foreign government and in the foreign nation has grown up this higher, this dearer, this deeper, this more vital and more divine faith in Indian humanity. . . . After all, what's this Indian problem? Is it a problem of politics? Is it a problem of economics? Is it a problem of administration? I refuse to accept it as such. It is not a political problem, not an economic problem. What is it then? It is a simple, psychological problem. You do not seem to follow me. . . . You ought to be able to find it for yourself, now, this problem, this strong problem, the government of 300 millions and more of aliens by less than three lakhs of persons over a vast continent. England rules India not by force of arms. It would be an impossibility, utter impossibility. . . . They might declare that India shall be governed by the sword and by the sword it will have to be kept. It was not won by the sword. British bayonets did not win India. If it was won by the sword it will have to be kept [by the sword]. [But] it was

not won by the sword. [Even] if it was won by the sword, it was the sword of the Indian sepoy that won India for the British nation, and it is not kept by the sword either. . . . Who governs India? It is we who govern India. Go to any district. How many Englishmen are there in a district? Sometimes two, sometimes three, sometimes four, but never more than half-a-dozen. . . . Let me ask, who keeps the peace of the country? . . . They are Hindus, Mohammadans or Christians. . . . The administrative machinery would come to a standstill if we draw ourselves away from it. Then, if it is so, what is the secret of this? . . . It is hypnotism. It is *Māyā*, *Māyā*, and *Māyā*, and in the recognition of the magic character of the British power in India lies the strength of the new movement. What we want is this: to remove this *Māyā*, to dispel this illusion, to kill and destroy this hypnotism. We have been hypnotized into the belief that though three hundred millions we might be, yet we are weak.

We have been told we are disunited and we have believed in it. We have been told that we are weak and we have believed in it. We have been told we are ignorant and we cannot understand politics and we have believed in it, and this belief has been the cause of all our weakness; and it has a hypnotic cause. It is induced by magic, by *Māyā*, and it is upon a recognition of this *Māyāic* character of the present sovereignty in India that the new movement bases itself, and it proclaims, therefore, that the salvation of India must come first and foremost of all through right knowledge. . . . It is therefore that we proclaim the strength of the people to them.

This movement is essentially a spiritual movement. It has its application in social, in economic, in political life of the sublime theosophy of the Vedānta. It means the desire to carry the message of freedom. . . . The message of the Vedānta is this: that every man has within himself, his own soul, as the very root and realization of his own being, the spirit of God; and as God is eternally free, self-realized, so is every man eternally free and self-realized. Freedom is man's birth-right. It is his birth-right in God. It is inherent in the very making of man. Man is made not out of the image, not in the image, but out of the substance of the maker, and as God is eternally free, so are you. . . . You realize it not, because you are enveloped in ignorance. You realize it not because this ideal of freedom has not as yet actua-



lized itself in your political life. . . . In the freedom of the free citizen comprising a free state—there and there alone can you recognize, can you actualize, can you objectify, can you bring it before yourself, your own natural freedom. . . . Our faith is first in God, faith in the history in and through which God reveals himself. Our faith is in the history of our people, and in the genius of our nation.

### C. *Sri Aurobindo*<sup>1</sup>

A certain class of mind shrinks from aggressiveness as if it were a sin. Their temperament forbids them to feel the delight of battle and they look on what they cannot understand as something monstrous and sinful. 'Heal hate by love', 'drive out injustice by justice', 'slay sin by righteousness' is their cry. Love is a sacred name, but it is easier to speak of love than to love. The love which drives out hate is a divine quality of which only one man in a thousand is capable. A saint full of love for all mankind possesses it, a philanthropist consumed with a desire to heal the miseries of the race possesses it, but the mass of mankind does not and cannot rise to the height. Politics is concerned with masses of mankind and not with individuals. To ask masses of mankind to act as saints, to rise to the height of divine love and practise it in relation to their adversaries or oppressors is to ignore human nature, it is to set a premium on injustice and violence by paralysing the hand of the deliverer when raised to strike. The *Gītā* is the best answer to those who shrink from battle as a sin, and aggression as a lowering of morality.

To submit to illegal or violent methods of coercion, to accept outrage and hooliganism as part of the legal procedure of the country is to be guilty of cowardice, and, by dwarfing national manhood, to sin against the divinity within ourselves and the divinity in our motherland. . . . Under certain circumstances a civil struggle becomes in reality a battle and the morality of war is different from the morality of peace. To shrink from bloodshed and violence under such circumstances is a weakness deserving as severe a rebuke as Śrī Kṛṣṇa addressed to Arjuna when he shrank from the colossal civil slaughter on the field of Kurukṣetra. Liberty is the life-breath of a nation; and when the life is attacked, when it is sought to suppress all chance of

<sup>1</sup> Sri Aurobindo, *The Doctrine of Passive Resistance*, pp. 62, 30, 82-3, 77-8.

breathing by violent pressure, any and every means of self-preservation becomes right and justifiable—just as it is lawful for a man who is being strangled to rid himself of the pressure on his throat by any means in his power. . . . Doubtless the self-defender is not precisely actuated by a feeling of holy sweetness towards his assailant; but to expect so much from human nature is impracticable. Certain religions demand it, but they have never been practised to the letter by their followers.

Hindiusm recognizes human nature and makes no such impossible demand. It sets one ideal for the saint, another for the man of action, a third for the trader, a fourth for the serf. To prescribe the same ideal for all is to bring about *varṇasankara*, the confusion of duties, and destroy society and race. If we are content to be serfs, then indeed, boycott is a sin for us, not because it is a violation of love, but because it is a violation of the Śūdra's duty of obedience and contentment. Politics is the ideal of the Kṣatriya, and the morality of the Kṣatriya ought to govern our political actions. To impose in politics the Brāhmanical duty of saintly sufferance is to preach *varṇasankara*.

The work of national emancipation is a great and holy *yajna*. . . . But every great *yajna* has its *Rākṣasas* (demons) who strive to baffle the sacrifice, to bespatter it with their own dirt or by guile or violence put out the flame. Passive resistance is an attempt to meet such disturbers by peaceful and self-contained *Brahmatej*; but even the greatest Ṛṣis of old could not, when the *Rākṣasas* were fierce and determined, keep up the sacrifice without calling in the bow of the Kṣatriya. We should have the bow of the Kṣatriya ready for use, though in the background. Politics is especially the business of the Kṣatriya, and without Kṣatriya strength at its back, all political struggle is unavailing.

## 3

## FREEDOM THROUGH REVOLUTION

*(Tyrannicide and revolution were known in India from ancient times. Unjust rulers were never willingly tolerated, and foreign invasions of India were never unresisted and no foreign conquest was ever accepted or tolerated. After every conquest and occupation forces of resistance gathered, increased and fought the conquerors till the latter were either*



merged in the country's population, losing their superiority as well as clear identity, or were driven off. Inspired by India's past history, the examples of Shivaji, the 1857 Revolt and the ideas and activities of the revolutionaries of the West, Secret Societies were founded in Bengal, Western India and Maharashtra in the late nineteenth century to plan and carry on revolutionary activities which would overthrow British rule. Rajanarain Bose was the first to found a secret society in Bengal, while W. B. Phadke (1845-82) started the first revolutionary society in Maharashtra. In 1900 V. D. Savarkar (born 1883) started the Mitra Mela in central India; and in 1901 was organized the Anusilan Samiti of P. Mitra in Bengal, which tried to establish revolutionary centres all over India. In Tamilnad V. V. S. Aiyer and in Central India Gendalal Dikshit (1888-1920) organized such activities. In Andhra Alluri Sitarama Raju (1897-1924) attempted to set up a parallel independent government organizing the tribes in the forest regions of North Andhra. Such people were inspired by the legends of Rana Pratap and Shivaji and the teachings of men like Rajanarain Bose who declared a nation must win its freedom by its own efforts, Swami Vivekananda who held that 'Strength is religion', Sri Aurobindo who announced that men were created free and that they cannot be bound, as freedom was natural and constitutional, and B. G. Tilak who gave the slogan that swarāj (self-rule) was one's birthright. Surendra Nath Banerjea's lectures on Mazzini and the writings of Mazzini, Kropotkin and Bankim Chandra Chatterji exerted a great influence on the men who engaged themselves in revolutionary activities. The goal of these revolutionaries was to establish the rule of righteousness (dharma-rājya) by overthrowing British imperialism. They sought to do this (1) by assassinations of individual officials of the government to terrorize the bureaucracy so that the administration might be paralysed and come to a stop, and (2) by inciting the Indian soldiers to prepare themselves for an armed conflict with the British in a favourable international situation. They made it their mission to rouse the political consciousness of the youth, labour, peasantry and the army. People were trained in the manufacture and use of weapons. Barindra Kumar Ghose (associated with Yugāntar, a journal) organized the revolutionary activities in Bengal and gave them a proper direction. From 1905 they became intense. They were financed by subscriptions, forced extortions and occasionally by political dacoities. In 1905 Shyamji Krishna Varma set up a society in London to achieve absolute freedom from British rule. This 'New India' group, of which V. D. Savarkar\* and Mohan Lal Dhingra were also leading members, was engaged in learning to manufacture bombs, and planning to kill the viceroy and start a revolution. Dhingra murdered Sir Curzon Wylie in

1909 in London. He was tried and hanged, and Savarkar was sentenced to transportation for life. In 1913 was founded the Gadar (revolution or revolt) Party by the Indians in the U.S.A. with the aim of overthrowing imperialist rule in India and establishing a national republic based on freedom and equality, through an armed national revolution. Lala Hardayal (1884-1939) was the most eminent leader of this movement, which did much to propagate through lectures and publications its ideology and exhorted Indians to be ready to fight against the British in the impending international crisis. During the first world war, with German help, an Indian Independence Committee was established in Berlin, and a 'Provisional Government of India' in Kabul. All these groups had contacts with India and attempts were made to ship arms, money and trained revolutionaries to India during this war. These attempts were foiled by the British, yet through the 1920's these and similar groups in Europe, America, the Far East, and West and Central Asia continued to hope and plan for an Indian Revolution.

During the war in Bengal, Uttar Pradesh and Panjab there was a good deal of revolutionary activity. In the North Rash Bihari Bose and in Bengal Jatindranath Mukerji were its guiding spirits. The plan was to make Indian soldiers all over India rise up in revolt, kill the British soldiers and officers and destroy communications, so that Indians could take charge of the government. It was also planned that the victorious revolutionaries would meet in Lahore. The British government terrorized and crushed these revolutionaries and interned a number of them, releasing them in 1919. Revolutionary activities once again revived when the Hindusthan Republican Association was started in Uttar Pradesh, in the early twenties, under Sachindranath Sanyal's leadership. To paralyse the government, a number of British officers were killed, armouries raided and communications disrupted. In 1925 Ramaprasad Bismil (hanged 1927), Chandrasekhar Azad (shot 1931) and others stopped a running train at Kakori and looted the government money in it to finance revolutionary activity. This created a tremendous stir. In 1929 Bhagat Singh and Batukeshwar Datta threw a bomb into the hall of the Central Legislative Assembly in Delhi. Their act and their famous statement roused the youth of India as nothing else did. The intensive terrorist activity of Bhagat Singh, Chandrasekhar Azad, Jatindranath Das and others in 1928-29 in Panjab and Uttar Pradesh, and events such as the famous raid on the Chittagong armoury in 1930 by Surya Sen, produced a cataclysmic impact on the government and people. Such events continued till 1934. Also, by the late twenties communist activity fomented widespread industrial and agrarian unrest. The constitutional developments of 1935 were as much due to all this as to the non-co-operation and the



civil-disobedience movements. In 1942 once again a suitable opportunity came to launch revolutionary activities. Mainly under the leadership of Jayaprakash Narayan during 1942-43 people waged a virtual war against the foreign government. Guerilla bands (Azad Dasta) trained under his guidance dislocated communications and partially paralysed the government. But the revolutionaries did not have a clear and complete programme and an efficient organization, while the British government was most brutal and ruthless in crushing them. Simultaneously, abroad Subhas Chandra Bose was busy organizing a national army to overthrow the British. (See next extract.) The role of the revolutionaries in bringing independence to India was as great as that of anyone else. (For details see: R. C. Majumdar, *History of the Freedom Movement in India*; Manmathanath Gupta, *Bhārat ke Krāntikārī*.)

The first extract below is from Dhingra's statement when he was being tried for killing Wyllie. Lloyd George and Winston Churchill admired him and compared him to Plutarch's heroes, and Churchill considered his words as the finest uttered in the name of patriotism. (R. C. Majumdar, *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 473.) The selections that follow this are from The Red Pamphlet of Bhagat Singh and Batukeshwar Datta and from their Joint Statement in the court on the occasion of their trial in 1929. These clearly set forth the goal of the revolutionaries, indicate the sources of their inspiration, distinguish between 'force' and 'violence' and try to justify the use of the former.—Editor.)

M. L. Dhingra<sup>1</sup>

I attempted to shed English blood as an humble revenge for the inhuman hangings and deportations of patriotic Indian youths.—I believe that a nation held in bondage with the help of foreign bayonets is in a perpetual state of war. Since an open battle is rendered impossible to a disarmed race, I attacked by surprise; since guns were denied to me, I drew forth my pistol and fired.—The war of independence will continue between India and England so long as the English and Hindu races last (if this present unnatural relation does not cease).

Bhagat Singh and Batukeshwar Datta<sup>2</sup>

We want to emphasize the lesson often repeated by history that

<sup>1</sup> Quoted in R. C. Majumdar, *History of The Freedom Movement in India*, Vol. II, p. 485.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted from their *The Red Pamphlet and Joint Statement*, by R. C. Majumdar, *History of The Freedom Movement in India*, Vol. III, pp. 515-7, 527-8.

it is easy to kill individuals but you cannot kill ideas. Great empires crumbled while ideas survive. Bourbons and Czars fell while revolutionaries marched triumphantly ahead. We are sorry to admit that we, who attach so great a sanctity to human life, we, who dream of a very glorious future, when man will be enjoying perfect peace and full liberty, have been forced to shed human blood. But the sacrifice of individuals at the altar of a great revolution that will bring freedom to all rendering exploitation of man by man impossible, is inevitable. *Inquilab Zindabad*. Long live Revolution.—

We wanted to emphasize the historical lesson that *lettres de cachet* and Bastilles could not crush the revolutionary movement in France. Gallows and Siberian mines could not extinguish the Russian Revolution.—Can ordinance and Safety Bills snuff out the flame of freedom in India?—

Force, when aggressively applied, is 'violence' and is therefore morally unjustifiable. But when it is used in furtherance of a legitimate cause it has its moral justification. Elimination of force at all costs is utopian and the new movement which has arisen in the country and of which we have given a warning is inspired by the ideals which guided Guru Govind Singh and Shivaji, Kemal Pasha and Riza Khan, Washington and Garibaldi, Lafayette and Lenin.—

Revolution does not necessarily involve sanguinary strife, nor is there any place in it for individual vendetta. It is not the cult of the bomb and pistol. By 'Revolution' we mean that the present order of things which is based on manifest injustice must change.—Radical change, therefore, is necessary and it is the duty of those who realize this to reorganize society on a socialistic basis. Unless this is done and exploitation of man and of nations by nations, which goes masquerading as imperialism, is brought to an end, the suffering and carnage with which humanity is threatened today cannot be prevented and all talk of ending wars and ushering in an era of universal peace is undisguised hypocrisy.



FREEDOM THROUGH RIGHT LEADERSHIP  
AND MARTYRDOMS. C. BOSE<sup>1</sup>

(Subhas Chandra Bose (1897-1945) who became an important Congress leader and became its President twice, could not reconcile himself to the identification of the Party with Gandhi and the uncritical faith of most congressmen in the latter. He could not also understand why Gandhi suspended civil disobedience without achieving freedom and why it should not be restarted. In spite of Gandhi's opposition, he was re-elected Congress President in 1939, but could not form a working committee as the Gandhians refused to co-operate. Thus he was forced out of the Congress, and founded a new party, the Forward Bloc. During the second world war, he escaped from India, went to Europe first and then to the Far East and with Japanese support, organized the Indian National Army. It was made up of captured Indian soldiers and officers and volunteers. Bose intended to drive out the British from India with Japanese help and establish a national government with the help of his army. He formed abroad a Free India Government and in 1943, along with the Japanese, his army came close to the Indian borders. The story of this army and its organization and doing have become an inspiring legend. That army, in Nehru's words, became the 'symbol' of the Indian fight for freedom as well as of Indian unity, because though its soldiers belonged to different religions, 'they solved the communal problem amongst themselves'. [Nehru.] Though with the fall of Japan the Indian National Army came to an end in 1944, its formation and the effects it produced brought home to the British the fact that they could no more rely on Indian soldiers to keep India in continued subjection. When the British put up for trial by court martial the officers of the Indian National Army, massive sympathy and admiration for that army were evoked throughout India and protests and demonstrations followed. The achievements of Bose's army and contact with its members roused the political consciousness of the Indian armed forces and spread the national idea among them. This was responsible for the open naval mutiny and unrest in the army and air-force in early 1946. All this made independence for India a live and urgent issue and accelerated its coming. Bose was not a fascist, he was a socialist who valued individual freedom, justice and equality of all men and religions. His was a philosophy of activism, modernism,

<sup>1</sup> Subhas Chandra Bose, *Cross Roads*, pp. 273, 12, 14, 52, 15, 194-6, 341-3.

*pragmatism, and optimism. (Netaji Speaks to the Nation.) He, however, believed in the supremacy of the state over the individual and was the mystagogue of a leadership doctrine. The true leader knows best what is the good of the state and individuals should in their own interests follow him. The following selections are from his speeches and writings before he left India during the second world war.—Editor.)*

### *Socialism, the Only Way*

The present age is the anti-imperialistic phase of our movement. Our main task in this age is to end imperialism and win national independence for the Indian people. When freedom comes, the age of national reconstruction will commence and that will be the socialist phase of our movement.—I have no doubt in my mind that our chief national problems relating to the eradication of poverty, illiteracy and disease and to scientific production and distribution can be effectively tackled only along socialistic lines.—With regard to the long-period programme for a Free India, the first problem to tackle is that of our increasing population. . . . If the population goes up by leaps and bounds, as it has done in the recent past, our plans are likely to fall through. . . . Regarding reconstruction, our principal problem will be how to eradicate poverty from our country. That will require a radical reform of our land system.—A comprehensive scheme of industrial development under state-ownership and state-control will be indispensable.—There is no escape from the industrial revolution. We can at best determine whether this revolution, that is industrialization, will be a comparatively gradual one, as in Great Britain or a forced march as in Soviet Russia. I am afraid that it has to be a forced march in this country.—The state on the advice of a planning commission, will have to adopt a comprehensive scheme for gradually socializing our entire agricultural and industrial system in the spheres of both production and appropriation.

### *Requisites for True Leadership*

In the life of every nation there come occasions when momentous decisions have to be taken which may make or mar its future. It often happens that on such occasions the final decision has to be made by a few individuals or even by one individual. What would have happened to Russia if Lenin had given a



different lead in 1917 is today a matter for speculation or conjecture.—How is this tremendous responsibility to be discharged by those who hold the future of their nation in the hollow of their hands? They have naturally to think and to think deeply. They have to look fore and aft—to consider possible alternatives and to weigh the probable consequences. But even then it may be difficult to decide. Not every leader can make a bold and clear decision when face to face with a crisis. But even if one has that capacity, the human intellect may fail to supply us with all the facts and considerations that are necessary for arriving at a definite conclusion.

We are sometimes told that where reason fails, instinct or intuition succeeds. The great heroes of history have felt their way through impenetrable darkness and their decisions, based on instinct or intuition, have been justified by subsequent events. There is a great deal of truth in this assertion. Within the ken of our limited experience, we have seen leaders make striking decisions in crucial moments, being guided solely by unerring political instinct and such decisions have proved to be correct in the light of subsequent developments. Now what is this elusive instinct or intuition? Is it something mystical—something beyond one's comprehension, something which is inborn? To a certain extent it is inborn. The successful painter or musician has a delicacy of touch and a fineness of perception which cannot be wholly explained by education or training. If he does not start with an innate artistic tendency, he can never reach the heights of artistic excellence. So also in the case of the political fighter. He must have a political sense at the very outset.

But instinct has to be sharpened by training and that training has to be continuous. If instinct or intuition has served as an unerring guide on half-a-dozen occasions, that is no guarantee that it will always do so. Now what is it that can help to make one's political instinct as faultless as possible?—It is absolutely necessary, *in the first place*, that one should be perfectly selfless in his pursuit. If instinct is warped by selfish considerations, whether conscious or unconscious, it will not lead—but mislead. And when self dominates instinct, disaster is ahead of us. Consequently, when playing with the destinies of a nation one should endeavour to be as selfless as humanly possible.—*Secondly*, one

should try to merge one's individual consciousness in mass-consciousness—so that the mass-mind may speak through our individual instinct or intuition. This is not an easy thing for the ordinary man. Fortunately, some people can merge their identity more easily in the life of the people than others and they can accordingly have a better understanding of the mass-mind. We know from our own experience that, all things being equal, that leader is more influential, more powerful and more successful, who has a better appreciation of mass-psychology. This appreciation is not possible through reason alone, but requires the help of instinct as well.

It is possible to so discipline and train one's mind that one can be in tune with the mass-mind. But this entails continuous effort and vigilance. Imagine a torrential stream breaking through a mountain gorge. Cannot the drops composing that cataract merge their identity in and put themselves in tune with the stream as a whole? Imagine the *élan vital* of Bergson. Cannot the human spirit plunge into the heart of reality and identify itself with its unceasing flow? Imagine the Absolute Idea of Hegel unfolding itself through a world-process. Cannot the individual merge himself in that evolutionary development and thereby comprehend it? Imagine the 'Divine *Sakti*' manifesting itself in a kaleidoscopic creation. Cannot the human soul seek to attain oneness with it in thought and feeling?

This instinctive or intuitive perception may go wrong and may lead us on to the blind alley of mysticism if we are not mentally fortified with a rational understanding of the evolution of the world and of man. We must therefore, *in the third place*, have a rational understanding—based on analysis, criticism and extensive study—of history. Where reason fails, instinct can guide us. Where instinct misleads by creating a mystical haze, reason can put us on the right path.—*Fourthly*, we must have a correct appreciation of international events and developments. We are living in an age when frontiers have, in a way, been obliterated. The world is today one unit. What happens in one corner has far-reaching repercussions throughout our globe. Consequently, even if we are in tune with the mass-mind, even if we have a correct understanding of historical development, we may still go wrong if we lack the international sense.



*'A Political Testament'*

For more than two months, the question has been knocking at the door of my conscience over and over again as to what I should do in such a predicament. Should I submit to the pressure of circumstances and accept whatever comes my way—or should I protest against what to me is unfair, unjust and illegal? After the most mature deliberation I have come to the conclusion that surrender to circumstances is out of the question. It is a more heinous crime to submit to a wrong inflicted than to perpetrate that wrong.—To purchase one's continued existence by compromising with illegality and injustice goes against my very grain. I would throw up life itself, rather than pay this price.—Though there may be no immediate, tangible gain, no suffering, no sacrifice is ever futile. It is through suffering and sacrifice alone that a cause can flourish and prosper and in every age and clime, the eternal law prevails—'the blood of the martyr is the seed of the church'.—In this mortal world, everything perishes and will perish; but ideas, ideals and dreams do not. One individual may die for an idea but that idea will, after his death, incarnate itself in a thousand lives. That is how the wheels of evolution move on, and the ideas, ideals and dreams of one generation are bequeathed to the next. No idea has ever fulfilled itself in this world except through an ordeal of suffering and sacrifice.

This is the technique of the soul: The individual must die, so that the nation may live.—To my countrymen I say, 'Forget not that the greatest curse for a man is to remain a slave. Forget not that the grossest crime is to compromise with injustice and wrong. Remember the eternal law: You must give life, if you want to get it. And remember that the highest virtue is to battle against iniquity, no matter what the cost may be.'

## FREEDOM THROUGH SATYĀGRAHA

M. K. GANDHI<sup>1</sup>

(Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948) needs no introduction. No one has ever made a greater impact than him on Indian society and history. It was he who was mainly responsible for spreading the national idea among the people of India, the bulk of whom live in thousands of far-flung villages without easy communications, and for developing in them an intense urge for national liberation. For about thirty years he was the idol, conscience and supreme guide of the Indian sub-continent. His greatest achievement was to convert the national movement into a mass struggle with a method of effective action. During his twenty years' stay in South Africa and thirty-three years' activity in India, he developed the theory and technique of Satyāgraha, which involves civil disobedience, the fighting against injustice and oppression in a non-violent way, and the readiness on the part of oneself to suffer voluntarily to create a 'change of heart' in tyrants, oppressors and unjust men. It seeks to conquer violence and hatred through love. Gandhi dominated the Congress since 1920 when at its Calcutta session, it 'adopted the policy of non-violent non-co-operation inaugurated by him'. It was similar to the boycott and passive resistance movements in so far as it asked its followers to boycott foreign goods, educational institutions, and law courts established by the foreign government; and demanded that no Indian should remain or engage in government service in any capacity, as it was contrary to national dignity and interests. It differed from the other movements as it on principle had to remain utterly non-violent whatever the provocation and the circumstances might be. It was 'a measure of discipline and self-sacrifice'. If in its implementation any violence occurred, it had to be suspended and its promoters and sincere followers had to repent and do penance to purify themselves through anguish and fasting. This method is described in the following selections—Editor.)

## A. Satyāgraha: Its Definition and Nature

Satyāgraha is literally holding on to Truth and it means, therefore, Truth-force. Truth is soul or spirit. It is, therefore, known

<sup>1</sup> M. K. Gandhi, *Satyagraha*, pp. 3, 4, 78, 383-4, 34-5, 189, 245, 352-3, 77, 364; *For The Pacifists*, pp. 16-19; *Satyagraha*, pp. 382, 56, 313, 70-1, 216, 385-7; *For The Pacifists*, pp. 42, 44.



as soul-force. It excludes the use of violence because man is not capable of knowing the absolute truth and, therefore, not competent to punish. The word was coined in South Africa to distinguish the non-violent resistance of the Indians of South Africa from the contemporary 'passive resistance' of the suffragettes and others. It is not conceived as a weapon of the weak.

Passive resistance is used in the orthodox English sense and covers the suffragette movement as well as the resistance of the Nonconformists. Passive resistance has been conceived and is regarded as a weapon of the weak. Whilst it avoids violence, being not open to the weak, it does not exclude its use if, in the opinion of a passive resister, the occasion demands it. However, it has always been distinguished from armed resistance and its application was at one time confined to Christian martyrs.

Civil Disobedience is civil breach of unmoral statutory enactments. The expression was, so far as I am aware, coined by Thoreau to signify his own resistance to the laws of a slave state. He has left a masterly treatise on the duty of Civil Disobedience. But Thoreau was not perhaps an out and out champion of non-violence. Probably, also, Thoreau limited his breach of statutory laws to the revenue law, i.e. payment of taxes—whereas the term Civil Disobedience as practised in 1919 covered a breach of any statutory and unmoral law. It signified the resister's outlawry in a civil, i.e. non-violent manner. He invoked the sanctions of the law and cheerfully suffered imprisonment. It is a branch of *Satyāgraha*.

Non-co-operation predominantly implies withdrawing of co-operation from the state that in the non-co-operator's view has become corrupt and excludes Civil Disobedience of the fierce type described above. By its very nature, non-co-operation is even open to children of understanding and can be safely practised by the masses. Civil Disobedience presupposes the habit of willing obedience to laws without fear of their sanctions. It can, therefore be practised only as a last resort and by a select few in the first instance at any rate. Non-co-operation, too, like Civil Disobedience is a branch of *Satyāgraha* which includes all non-violent resistance for the vindication of truth.

*Satyāgraha* literally means insistence on truth. This insistence arms the votary with matchless power. This power or force is

connoted by the word *Satyāgraha*. *Satyāgraha*, to be genuine, may be offered against one's wife or one's children, against rulers, against fellow citizens, even against the whole world.—Such a universal force necessarily makes no distinction between kinsmen and strangers, young and old, man and woman, friend and foe. The force to be so applied can never be physical. There is in it no room for violence. The only force of universal application can, therefore, be that of *ahimsā* or love. In other words it is soul-force.—Love does not burn others, it burns itself. Therefore, a *Satyāgrahi*, i.e. a civil resister, will joyfully suffer even unto death.

### B. *Non-Violence: Its theory and practice*

I have found that life persists in the midst of destruction, and therefore, there must be a higher law than that of destruction. Only under that law would a well-ordered society be intelligible and life worth living. And if that is the law of life, we have to work it out in daily life. Wherever there are jars, wherever you are confronted with an opponent, conquer him with love. In a crude manner I have worked it out in my life. That does not mean that all my difficulties are solved. I have found, however, that this law of love has answered as the law of destruction has never done. In India we have had an ocular demonstration of the operation of this law on the widest scale possible.

The law of love will work, just as the law of gravitation will work, whether we accept it or not. Just as a scientist will work wonders out of various applications of the law of nature, even so a man who applies the law of love with scientific precision can work greater wonders. For the force of non-violence is infinitely more wonderful and subtle than the material forces of nature, like, for instance, electricity. The men who discovered for us the law of love were greater scientists than any of our modern scientists. Only our explorations have not gone far enough and so it is not possible for everyone to see all its working. Such, at any rate, is the hallucination, if it is one, under which I am labouring. The more I work at this law the more I feel the delight in life, the delight in the scheme of this universe. It gives me a peace and a meaning of the mysteries of nature that I have no power to describe.

Carried out to its utmost limit, *Satyāgraha* is independent of



pecuniary or other material assistance; certainly, even in its elementary form, of physical force or violence. Indeed, violence is the negation of this great spiritual force, which can only be cultivated or wielded by those who will entirely eschew violence. It is a force that may be used by individuals as well as by communities. It may be used as well in political as in domestic affairs. Its universal applicability is a demonstration of its permanence and invincibility. It can be used alike by men, women and children. It is totally untrue to say that it is a force to be used only by the weak so long as they are not capable of meeting violence by violence. This superstition arises from the incompleteness of the English expression, passive resistance. It is impossible for those who consider themselves to be weak to apply this force. Only those who realize that there is something in man which is superior to the brute nature in him and that the latter always yields to it, can effectively be *Satyāgrahis*. This force is to violence, and, therefore, to all tyranny, all injustice, what light is to darkness. In politics, its use is based upon the immutable maxim, that government of the people is possible only so long as they consent either consciously or unconsciously to be governed.

The use of this force requires the adoption of poverty, in the sense that we must be indifferent whether we have the wherewithal to feed or clothe ourselves. . . . The exercise of the purest soul-force, in its perfect form, brings about instantaneous relief. For this exercise, prolonged training of the individual soul is an absolute necessity, so that a perfect *Satyāgrahi* has to be almost, if not entirely, a perfect man.

### *C. Satyāgraha and Belief in God*

*Satyāgrahis* must not be dejected. They dare not give way to despair. Of all my Tamil lessons one proverb at least abides with me as an evergreen. Its literal meaning is, 'God is the only Help for the helpless'. The grand theory of *Satyāgraha* is built upon a belief in that truth. Hindu religious literature, indeed all religious literature, is full of illustrations to prove the truth. . . . God will never fail them, if they have faith in Him. . . . And victory will surely come out of their sufferings provided they are pure. God tries His votaries through and through, but never beyond endurance. He gives them strength enough to go through

the ordeal He prescribes for them.—Success depends not upon our high skill. It depends solely upon God. And He only helps the vigilant and the humble.—Truth is God. This God is a living Force. Our life is of that Force. That Force resides in, but is not the body. He who denies the existence of that great Force, denies to himself the use of that inexhaustible Power and thus remains impotent. He is like a rudderless ship which, tossed about here and there, perishes without making any headway.—The fact is that it has always been a matter of strenuous research to know this great Force and its hidden possibilities.—My claim is that in the pursuit of that search lies the discovery of *Satyāgraha*.

#### D. *Qualifications of a Satyāgrahi*

*Satyāgraha* presupposes self-discipline, self-control, self-purification, and a recognized social status in the person offering it. A *Satyāgrahi* must never forget the distinction between evil and the evil-doer. He must not harbour ill-will or bitterness against the latter. He may not even employ needlessly offensive language against the evil person, however unrelieved his evil might be. For it should be an article of faith with every *Satyāgrahi* that there is none so fallen in this world but can be converted by love. A *Satyāgrahi* will always try to overcome evil by good, anger by love, untruth by truth, *himsā* by *ahimsā*. There is no other way of purging the world of evil.

Although *Satyāgraha* can operate silently, it requires a certain amount of action on the part of a *Satyāgrahi*. A *Satyāgrahi*, for instance, must first mobilize public opinion against the evil which he is out to eradicate, by means of a wide and intensive agitation. When public opinion is sufficiently roused against a social abuse even the tallest will not dare to practise or openly to lend support to it. An awakened and intelligent public opinion is the most potent weapon of a *Satyāgrahi*.

A *Satyāgrahi* has no other stay but God, and he who has any other stay or depends on any other help cannot offer *Satyāgraha*. He may be a passive resister, non-co-operator and so on, but not a true *Satyāgrahi*.

After a great deal of experience it seems to me that those who want to become passive resisters for the service of the country have to observe perfect chastity, adopt poverty, follow truth, and cultivate fearlessness.



How are we to train individuals or communities in this difficult art?—There is no royal road, except through living the creed in your life which must be a living sermon. Of course, the expression in one's own life presupposes great study, tremendous perseverance, and thorough cleansing of one's self of all the impurities. If for mastering of the physical sciences you have to devote a whole lifetime, how many lifetimes may be needed for mastering the greatest spiritual force that mankind has known? But why worry even if it means several lifetimes? For, if this is the only permanent thing in life, if this is the only thing that counts, then whatever effort you bestow on mastering it is well spent. Seek ye first the Kingdom of Heaven and everything else shall be added unto you. The Kingdom of Heaven is *ahimsā*.

The first step is firmly to resolve that all untruth and *himsā* shall hereafter be taboo to us, whatever sacrifice it might seem to involve. For, the good these may seem to achieve is in appearance only, but in reality it is deadly poison. If our resolve is firm and our conviction clear, it would mean half the battle won, and the practice of these two qualities would come comparatively easy to us.

We have all along regarded the spinning wheel, village crafts, etc. as the pillars of *ahimsā*, and so indeed they are. They must stand. But we have now to go a step further. A votary of *ahimsā* will of course base upon non-violence, if he has not already done so, all his relations with his parents, his children, his wife, his servants, his dependents, etc. But the real test will come at the time of political or communal disturbances or under the menace of thieves and dacoits. Mere resolve to lay down one's life under the circumstances is not enough. There must be the necessary qualification for making the sacrifice. If I am a Hindu, I must fraternize with the Mussalmans and the rest. In my dealings with them I may not make any distinction between my co-religionists and those who might belong to a different faith. I would seek opportunities to serve them without any feeling of fear or unnaturalness. The word 'fear' can have no place in the dictionary of *ahimsā*. Having thus qualified himself by his selfless service, a votary of pure *ahimsā* will be in a position to make a fit offering of himself in a communal conflagration. Similarly, to meet the menace of thieves and dacoits, he will need to go

among, and cultivate friendly relations with, the communities from which the thieves and dacoits generally come.

### E. *Conditions for Satyāgraha*

The conditions necessary for the success of *Satyāgraha* are: (1) The *Satyāgrahi* should not have any hatred in his heart against the opponent. (2) The issue must be true and substantial. (3) The *Satyāgrahi* must be prepared to suffer till the end for his cause.

There can be no *Satyāgraha* in an unjust cause. *Satyāgraha* in a just cause is vain, if the men espousing it are not determined and capable of fighting and suffering to the end; and the slightest use of violence often defeats a just cause. *Satyāgraha* excludes the use of violence in any shape or form, whether in thought, speech, or deed. Given a just cause, capacity for endless suffering and avoidance of violence, victory is a certainty.—A *Satyāgraha*, therefore cannot be resorted to for personal gain, but only for the good of others.

### F. *Satyāgraha can achieve anything*

I do say, fearlessly and firmly, that every worthy object can be achieved by the use of *Satyāgraha*. It is the highest and infallible means, the greatest force. Socialism will not be reached by any other means. *Satyāgraha* can rid society of all evils, political, economic and moral.

The *Satyāgrahi* must be wholly unarmed, and in spite of insults, kicks or worse must meekly stand the ground, and be arrested without the slightest opposition. . . . If there are many such real *Satyāgrahis*, they will certainly transform the atmosphere in an immensely short time, even as one gentle shower transforms the plains of India into a beautiful green carpet in one single day.—The standard of purity that I want, for any such heroic measure is not to have such passions at all and yet to hate the wrong.

The limit [of *Satyāgraha*] will then be prescribed by the capacity of India as a whole for self-sacrifice and self-suffering. If that manifestation is to come it will be natural and incapable of being stayed by any agency no matter how powerful.

### G. *Can Satyāgraha be a principle of state policy?*

I fear that the chances of non-violence being accepted as a prin-



ciple of state policy are very slight, so far as I can see at present.

But I may state my own individual view of the potency of non-violence. I believe that a state can be administered on a non-violent basis if the vast majority of the people are non-violent. So far as I know, India is the only country which has a possibility of being such a state. I am conducting my experiment in that faith. Supposing, therefore, that India attained independence through pure non-violence, India could retain it too by the same means. A non-violent man or society does not anticipate or provide for attacks from without. On the contrary, such a person or society firmly believes that nobody is going to disturb them. If the worst happens, there are two ways open to non-violence. To yield possession but non-co-operate with the aggressor. Thus, supposing that a modern edition of Nero descended upon India, the representatives of the state will let him in but tell him that he will get no assistance from the people. They will prefer death to submission. The second way would be non-violent resistance by the people who have been trained in the non-violent way. They would offer themselves unarmed as fodder for the aggressor's cannon. The underlying belief in either case is that even a Nero is not devoid of a heart. The unexpected spectacle of endless rows upon rows of men and women simply dying rather than surrender to the will of an aggressor must ultimately melt him and his soldiery. Practically speaking there will be probably no greater loss in men than if forcible resistance was offered; there will be no expenditure in armaments and fortifications. The non-violent training received by the people will add inconceivably to their moral height. Such men and women will have shown personal bravery of a type far superior to that shown in armed warfare. In each case the bravery consists in dying, not in killing. Lastly, there is no such thing as defeat in non-violent resistance. That such a thing has not happened before is no answer to my speculation. I have drawn no impossible picture. History is replete with instances of individual non-violence of the type I have mentioned. There is no warrant for saying or thinking that a group of men and women cannot by sufficient training act non-violently as a group or nation. Indeed the sum total of the experience of mankind is that men somehow or other live on. From which fact I infer that it is the law of love that rules mankind. Had violence, i.e. hate,

ruled us, we should have become extinct long ago. And yet the tragedy of it is that the so-called civilized men and nations conduct themselves as if the basis of society was violence. It gives me ineffable joy to make experiments proving that love is the supreme and only law of life. Much evidence to the contrary cannot shake my faith. Even the mixed non-violence of India has supported it. But if it is not enough to convince an unbeliever, it is enough to incline a friendly critic to view it with favour.

However small a nation or even a group may be, it is able, even as the individual, provided that it has one mind as also the will and the grit, to defend its honour and self-respect against a whole world in arms. Therein consists the matchless strength and beauty of the unarmed. That is non-violent defence which neither knows nor accepts defeat at any stage. Therefore, a nation or a group which has made non-violence its final policy, cannot be subjected to slavery even by the atom bomb.

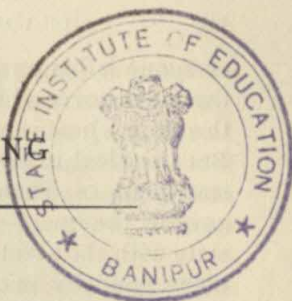
It is not possible for a modern state based on force, non-violently to resist forces of disorder, whether external or internal. A man cannot serve God and Mammon, nor be 'temperate and furious' at the same time.—The bully has his opportunity when he has to face non-violence of the weak. Non-violence of the strong is any day stronger than that of the bravest soldier fully armed or a whole host.—There can be no non-violence offered by the militarily strong.—If those who were at one time strong in armed might, change their mind, they will be better able to demonstrate their non-violence to the world and, therefore, also to their opponents.

I am not a visionary. I claim to be a practical idealist. The religion of non-violence is not meant merely for the *ṛṣis* and saints. It is meant for the common people as well. Non-violence is the law of our species as violence is the law of the brute. The spirit lies dormant in the brute, and he knows no law but that of physical might. The dignity of man requires obedience to a higher law—to the strength of the spirit.—Non-violence in its dynamic condition means conscious suffering. It does not mean meek submission to the will of the evil-doer, but it means putting one's whole soul against the will of the tyrant. Working under this law of our being, it is possible for a single individual to defy the whole might of an unjust empire, to save his honour, his religion and his soul.



C  
UTOPIAN THINKING

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I  
THE KINGDOM OF RĀMA

M. K. GANDHI<sup>1</sup>

*(In the previous extract the Gandhian method of Satyāgraha has been described and therein has also been discussed the point whether it could be a principle of State policy. In what follows Gandhi outlines his conception of ideal society.—Editor.)*

A. *Swarāj or Rāmarāj*

The first step to Swarāj lies in the individual. The great truth: 'As with the individual so with the universe', is applicable here as elsewhere.—Government over self is the truest Swarāj, it is synonymous with mokṣa or salvation.—Swarāj of a people means the sum total of the Swarāj (self-rule) of individuals.

Self-government depends entirely upon our own internal strength, upon our ability to fight against the heaviest odds. Indeed, self-government which does not require that continuous striving to attain it and to sustain it, is not worth the name. I have therefore endeavoured to show both in word and deed, that political self-government—that is self-government for a large number of men and women—is no better than individual self-government, and therefore, it is to be attained by precisely the same means that are required for individual self-government or self-rule.

Political power is not an end but one of the means of enabling people to better their condition in every department of life. Political power means capacity to regulate national life through national representatives. If national life becomes so perfect as to become self-regulated, no representation becomes necessary. There is then a state of enlightened anarchy.<sup>2</sup> In such a state

<sup>1</sup> *Selections From Gandhi*, pp. 37, 41-2, 109-10, 73-4, 287-8.

<sup>2</sup> Cp. *Arājaka* states in ancient India, described in 'Forms of Ancient Indian States', *supra*.—Ed.

everyone is his own ruler. He rules himself in such a manner that he is never a hindrance to his neighbour. In the ideal state therefore, there is no political power because there is no state. But the ideal is never fully realized in life. Hence the classical statement of Thoreau that that government is best which governs the least.—I look upon an increase in the power of the state with the greatest fear, because, although while apparently doing good by minimizing exploitation, it does the greatest harm to mankind by destroying individuality which lies at the root of all progress.

The state represents violence in a concentrated and organized form. The individual has a soul, but as the state is a soulless machine, it can never be weaned from violence to which it owes its very existence.—It is my firm conviction that if the state suppressed capitalism by violence, it will be caught in the coils of violence itself and fail to develop non-violence at any time.—What I would personally prefer would be not a centralization of power in the hands of the state, but an extension of the sense of trusteeship; as in my opinion, the violence of private ownership is less injurious than the violence of the state. However, if it is unavoidable, I would support a minimum of state-ownership.—What I disapprove of is an organization based on force which a state is. Voluntary organization there must be.

By Swarāj<sup>1</sup> I mean the government of India by the consent of the people as ascertained by the largest number of the adult population, male or female, native born or domiciled, who have contributed by manual labour to the service of the state and who have taken the trouble of having their names registered as voters. I hope to demonstrate that real Swarāj will come not by the acquisition of authority by a few but by the acquisition of the capacity by all to resist authority when abused. In other words, Swarāj is to be attained by educating the masses to a sense of their capacity to regulate and control authority.—It means the consciousness in the average villager that he is the maker of his own destiny, he is his own legislator through his chosen representative.—We have long been accustomed to think that power comes only through Legislative Assemblies. I

<sup>1</sup> While Gandhi's ultimate ideal is 'an enlightened anarchy' of liberated souls, a Kingdom of Heaven, in this paragraph is set forth his immediately realisable 'swarāj'.—Ed.



have regarded this belief as a grave error brought about by inertia or hypnotism. A superficial study of British history has made us think that all power percolates to the people from parliaments. The truth is that power resides in the people and it is entrusted for the time being to those whom they may choose as their representatives. Parliaments have no power or even existence independently of the people.

By political independence I do not mean an imitation of the British House of Commons, or the Soviet rule of Russia or the Fascist rule of Italy or the Nazi rule of Germany. They have systems suited to their genius. We must have ours suited to ours. What that can be is more than I can tell. I have described it as *Rāmarāj*<sup>1</sup> i.e. sovereignty of the people based on pure moral authority.

#### B. *The Ideal State, a Network of Independent Village Republics*

My idea of Village Swarāj is that it is a complete republic, independent of its neighbours for its vital wants, and yet interdependent for many others in which dependence is a necessity.<sup>2</sup> Thus every village's first concern will be to grow its own food crops and cotton for its cloth. It should have a reserve for its cattle, recreation and playground for adults and children. Then if there is more land available, it will grow useful money crops, thus excluding ganja, tobacco, opium and the like. The village will maintain a village theatre, school and public hall. It will have its own waterworks ensuring clean supply. This can be done through controlled wells and tanks. Education will be compulsory up to the final basic course. As far as possible every activity will be conducted on the co-operative basis. There will be no castes such as we have today with their graded untouchability. Non-violence with its technique of *Satyāgraha* and non-co-operation will be the sanction of the village community. There will be a compulsory service of village guards who will be selected by rotation from the register maintained by the village. The government of the village will be conducted by the *Pancāyat* of five persons, annually elected by the adult villagers, male and female, possessing minimum prescribed

<sup>1</sup> Means the Kingdom of Rāma (God).—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> Gandhi's 'Village Swarāj' is strikingly similar to the system that once existed in India (see extract on *Kurrams* in Part I.)—Ed.

qualifications. These will have all the authority and jurisdiction required. Since there will be no system of punishments in the accepted sense, this Pancāyat will be the legislature, judiciary and executive combined to operate for its year of office. Any village can become such a republic today without much interference, even from the present government whose sole effective connection with the villages is the exaction of the village revenue. I have not examined here the question of relations with the neighbouring villages and the centre if any. My purpose is to present an outline of village government. Here there is perfect democracy based upon individual freedom. The individual is the architect of his own government. The law of non-violence rules him and his government. He and his village are able to defy the might of a world. For the law governing every villager is that he will suffer death in the defence of his and his village's honour.

### *C. The Doctrine of Trusteeship*

Everything belonged to God and was from God. Therefore it was for His people as a whole, not for a particular individual. When an individual had more than his proportionate portion he became a trustee of that portion for God's people.

God who was all-powerful had no need to store. He created from day to day, hence men also should in theory live from day to day and not stock things. If this truth was imbibed by the people generally, it would become legalized and trusteeship would become a legalized institution. He [Gandhi] wished it became a gift from India to the world. Then there would be no exploitation and no reserves as in Australia and other countries for white men and their posterity. In these distinctions lay the seeds of a war more virulent than the last two. As to the successor, the trustee in office would have the right to nominate his successor subject to legal sanction.—But the choice must be finalized by the state. Such arrangement puts a check on the state as well as the individual.—It was in order to avoid confiscation that the doctrine of trusteeship came into play, retaining for society the ability of the original owner in his own right.



## THE KINGDOM OF BENEVOLENCE THROUGH 'DĀNA'

V. BHAVE<sup>1</sup>

*(In post-independence India, Vinoba Bhave (born 1895) represents the great Gandhian heritage. He is a thinker, scholar and linguist, and wants to bring in an era of science and spirituality, believing that politics and religion, as previously understood, are outmoded. His ideal society involves the abolition of private property and the absence of the state, and would consist of decentralized communities of spiritual persons basing themselves on morality only. The rich must voluntarily gift away their lands and wealth to society, for except God no one can claim to own anything. All wealth in any form belongs to God (Sampati sab Raghupati kī āhī), as Saint Tulasidas said. All charity (dāna) is equitable division of what one has with others, as Śankara said long ago. Vinoba believes he has come to continue the Buddha's unfulfilled mission of removing the world's misery. He has inaugurated the Bhūdān (land-gift) and Sampattidān (property-gift) movements.—Editor.)*

Now that we are independent, we are free to weigh up and choose any of the many ways open to us for refashioning our society. We have to decide the proper means to follow for solving the several problems with which we are faced. If we take to evil means for achieving good ends, there can be no end to our problems.—On the other hand, if we take to truthful and non-violent means, all problems will be resolved in due course and be no more, not only in India, but in the world.—The sentiment of religion has always quickened the hearts of the people of this ancient land to their duty. Now what is religion? All wealth that is given to us by God and all the gifts of power and intelligence that are endowed to us by Him are meant for the service of society: that is religion. We cannot be masters of wealth. God alone is the Master.—I am following the foot-prints of the Buddha. The essence of the Buddha's teaching is to deliver the unhappy amongst us from their misery, to render succour to

<sup>1</sup> Vinoba Bhave's Speeches in Suresh Ram, *Vinoba and His Mission*, pp. 73, 137, 84, 92-3, 73, 193, 61, 84, 110-11, 136-7, 158-60, 162-3, 113, 112, 276-7, 85-7, 125-6, 173-4, 121.

those who lived uncared for as the castaways of society. This is also the teaching of the Vedas and the saints. We have now to practise this teaching.

I expressed the necessity of synthesizing the two words, viz. the Nirvāṇa of the Buddhists and the Brahma-Nirvāṇa of Vedānta. Vedānta connotes *Sarvaṅgīṇa Samagra Satya-darśan*: final unitive glimpse of reality in which all possible conflicts of diversity are welded into one whole. And we perceive that its nature is *Ahimsā*. We would have to accomplish the synthesis of these two elements in our life and philosophy. The attempts at synthesis so far gave us one direction, but one does not find completeness therein. Perhaps completeness will never be attained. Today God has also placed a mighty programme of synthesis [Bhūdān] before us. I want to solve the land problem peacefully. It is no small problem. I ask people to give the land they have. I do not beg it. I would have begged, had I been asking for it for myself. When, however, I ask for it as a representative of the poor, I do not beg; but I claim to teach the people their duty of divesting themselves of their extra riches.—They still ask me why I am going about begging for alms. They do not know that the great Śaṅkarācārya has defined *dāna* as *Dānam samvibhāgaḥ*, i.e., equitable redistribution.—What I want the people to do is, first, to part with some of their land. Secondly, they should engage themselves in the service of others. Finally, in their service they should give up all and voluntarily sacrifice everything. This is the path into which I want to initiate the people.

As the work of Bhūdān progressed it became increasingly clear that the idea behind the movement could not be fulfilled unless we went further and asked for a portion of wealth and property. And hence, I made up my mind that I must also ask for a share of wealth and property from the people. I have now done it and placed my demand at one-sixth of it; but it is up to them to decide what they can and would give me.—I want to point out that the idea behind Bhūdān which I have been propagating all these days is such as to be acceptable to the most modern of economists. All land in the village should belong to the village and everybody who wants to till land should get it. You would have to discover the science of obtaining good production from small pieces of land. Besides, I believe that Bhūdān has a spiri-



tual aspect too: there is no better source of worshipping God than a service of the mother earth.—The work to be done now is that of *Bhūmi Krānti* (land revolution). Merely giving land to the landless is not sufficient. Private land-ownership is to be abolished. Land can only be God's or of the society. If the people at any place like this idea, it would amount to the *pūrṇatā* [completeteness] of *Bhūdān Yajna*.

If we could remedy the misery and remove poverty, peace in the land would be firmly established and the people would grow in unity. . . . If we want peace in the world we should abolish the right of property in land in every village. Land in a village should belong to it as a whole and factories in the country to the whole nation. None should be owner of property. This is the only means to achieve happiness. Our hearts are divided because of the feelings of me and mine, and you and yours that prevail today. Divisions are in evidence between neighbours, between nations and between races and castes. We seek to do away with them. The people of India would understand this idea more speedily than others. It is not difficult for people here to perceive that we as people are all one. The reason is our seers have taught the ideal to us from very ancient times till today.—So long as the principle of competition holds sway over the structure of human association, so long as land and water do not belong commonly to all human beings, men are bound to behave worse than brutes in their 'economic' relations at any rate.—What the Westerners call socialism is not clearly understood here. But still for the West as well as for the East, there is only one decent way of living, viz. to make the land a common property and live on it as fellow-workers and co-partners. . . . Justice must be made to triumph in the very formation of human society.

Everyone should have the basic needs of life. It is against Dharma that some should suffer and others may enjoy. Like air and water, land also is a basic need for human existence. It is on land that food is grown. Anyone keeping it as owner, excluding others and saying that he will part with it on payment of money value, is wrong. This wrong has crept in somehow or other and the poor had to suffer so much. To undo this wrong is Bhūdān Movement. The tiller must get the land, just like a thirsty man receives water to drink.—There are also persons who claim the

right to property. Such persons, I feel, are enemies of God. Only God who is the Lord of the Universe can claim to be the owner of anything in this world. The ideal of the Sarvodaya movement is to see that everything in the world is owned by the community.

We should look upon all our activity for production as worship of the Lord of the universe. Antagonistic productive labour and unproductive labour are both injurious to the good of man and society.—If the rich grasp the Sarvodaya ideal and act upon it, this conflict will disappear. I pray to my rich friends to take up three things: (i) They should renounce profit or interest hunting; (ii) They should agree to make use of their property as trustees and declare before the country to that effect; and (iii) I would like them to donate one-sixth of their income in *Sampattidān* as a symbol of love and as a token of their acceptance of the Sarvodaya idea, so that the poor and the landless can be helped immediately.—There is one thing which we will demonstrate through *Sampattidān*: that non-possession is a force for social good. We have long known that non-possession brings about individual purification. We have to realize that it can also serve as powerful means of social well-being. We have to prove that it is not only spiritually efficacious but it can help us in constructing better and richer worldly life.

We should create *Swatantra Jana-Śakti* (the self-reliant power of the people). Let me make it clear. It should be distinguished from the other two forms of power—the power of violence (*himsāśakti*) and the power of the state (*danḍaśakti*). The power of the people is the opposite of the power of violence, and though there is no direct opposition between the power of the people and the power of the State, yet the two are qualitatively different.—We do not aim merely at doing acts of kindness, but at creating a kingdom of benevolence. Kindness can and does exist even in the kingdom of wickedness, but only as a pinch of salt does in food. Such kindly acts only add to the taste of that with which they are mixed. They bring a sort of flavour to the violence of war, they cannot end war. We do not aim merely at well-meaning charity of ritualistic constructive work. It is ineffective in dispelling the forces of darkness.—I, therefore, want to devote myself to the creation of *Jana-Śakti*, the forging of sanctions of enlightened public opinion.



Our work should proceed on the basis of—(a) *Vicāraśāsan*, i.e. peaceful conversion of people to our view by making them think about it; and (b) *Kartṛtvavibhājan*, i.e. distribution of work among individuals without creating an administrative bureaucracy.—*Vicāraśāsan* means the readiness on our part to understand the other person's point of view and to explain ours to him. In no case shall we seek to impose our view on anyone. We will rather insist that they accept it only after they are convinced of its correctness.—The other instrument of our work is *Kartṛtvavibhājan*, or the distribution of work among individuals. There should be no concentration of power to act and execute at any one point. Freedom from dependence or armed might can come only by following the policy which God has adopted in regard to creation. . . . Indeed he has so far removed Himself from the scene that some of us are led even to doubt His presence. In the same way we should strive to create a state which would not need to exercise its coercive authority. Then only will we be said to have a non-violent state. So with this end in view we make the demand for investing the villages with the power to manage their own affairs so as to establish Grām-Rāj.—We must gird up our loins in such a manner as to establish a new society in the whole world.—Unless we work strenuously for two years to render our society state-free, non-violence will not accrue.—[Our aim is] the welfare of the whole world, [or] the benefit of the entire creation. *Sarvabhūta-hitē ratāh*, is [our] message. It is not only a matter of tackling the land issue. We have, in fact, to wipe out all governments of the world for they cannot succeed in limiting the sphere of armed activity. We have to found non-violence. I ask for land-gifts for the sake of world peace.

Establishing non-violent society is the objective of Sarva Sevā Sangh.<sup>1</sup> Such a society cannot be brought into existence through the agency of organized government. Democracy rests on the consent of the people. It is necessary therefore to proceed in the direction of building up a social order which is not sustained by the coercive power of the state. Sarva Sevā Sangh will not participate in power-oriented political activities. It can have no affinity or partiality for anyone of the political parties in the state. The party in power and parties in opposition

<sup>1</sup> A society to promote Sarvodaya, the ideals of Gandhi and Vinoba.—Ed.

are the same in its eyes. Democracy today means a rule of a party. Sarva Sevā Sangh desires to make it into a rule of the people. It is therefore not interested in the victory or defeat of any particular political party. It aims at a change of heart in all. If it supports or opposes anyone the process of bringing about a change of heart would be obstructed. Sarva Sevā Sangh will have nothing to do with the political elections. Not only will it keep aloof from seeking election, it will not even help anyone in the elections.

Many who believe in Sarvodaya thought may like to exercise the right of vote in the present circumstances. Obviously they will not favour parties who do not believe in non-violence and who are communal in outlook. Those who are members of some political parties believe that just as it is a duty to vote, there are also circumstances when not exercising the right may become a sacred duty. If bad candidates are put up by political parties it becomes the duty of every citizen who has faith in true democracy to abstain from voting for such an unworthy candidate.

Most of us believe that society will reach such a stage in the course of its evolution as would eliminate the necessity to run a government based on coercion or the power to punish. Even the communists accept this as the ultimate objective. . . . There are still others who believe in the necessity of some form of coercion-based government in every stage. They maintain that coercion would be less than it is today, but its need shall always be there. Thus there are diverse views about the ultimate picture. But all of us know that under the existing situation coercion-based governments are a reality and will continue to be so for the present. We will have to admit that coercion has its place today. Nevertheless, the essential characteristic of non-violent society would be that its greatest institution would be based on service. There shall be room for coercion and government in it, but that would be secondary. Service of the people would enjoy the highest place and the biggest organization would be service-centred.



## 3

## A CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAMME

JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN<sup>1</sup>

(Jayaprakash Narayan (born 1902) was once a well-known Marxist, and one of the founders of the Congress Socialist Party. From 1940 he was disillusioned with communist methods and ideology and became a democratic socialist. He was the principal leader of the great revolutionary movement in 1942-3, which shook very much the British grip over India. From 1947 he began to advocate a peaceful and democratic path to socialism, and came to be increasingly influenced by Gandhian teachings. He finally broke with Marxism in 1952 and plunged into the Bhūdān movement of Bhave. In 1957 he gave up all association with party politics. In 1959 he published his *Reconstruction of Indian Polity*. Dissatisfied with the Western type of parliamentary democracy he now pleads for political institutions based on principles 'enunciated and practised in the ancient Indian polity' (cp. Part I, B, 5.), which are, he says, in line with the course of India's social evolution and more valid than any others from the point of view of social science. He thinks a communitarian polity is best suited to India. Its foundation must be 'self-governing, self-sufficient, agro-industrial, urbo-rural, local communities'. All the adults of each community will form its general assembly with the executive selected by the assembly's consensus. By the integration of these executives will be formed the regional, district, provincial and national councils, each of which will represent the lower bodies and will be respectively elected by them [the bodies] and not by their members. That is his ideal. (See his *Socialism, Sarvodaya and Democracy*, edited by Bimla Prasad, Bombay, 1964.) What follows is his programme 'to awaken and activize the masses'.—Editor.)

The biggest asset that India has is her 38 crores of people. . . . India possesses this titanic strength. But the Titan, alas, is asleep and the asset is a heavy liability at present. . . . On two points there was complete agreement at the talks that I had had in November 1959 in Delhi. It was agreed (a) that there were widespread apathy and inertia in the country, and (b) that unless these were removed and the energies of the people fully mobilized no significant programme of national reconstruction could

<sup>1</sup> J. P. Narayan, in *The Hindu*, March 30, 1959, pp. 1, 10.

succeed.—The question, however, is how to awaken and activize the masses, how to develop their hidden powers. . . . The methods of mobilizing the people that are available to totalitarian regimes, whether fascist or communist, cannot be used in a democracy. . . . The task is far more difficult in a democratic system particularly when special historical circumstances such as a long period of foreign servitude have sapped the native strength of the masses and thwarted their powers of initiative.

First, let us take the government. Many people in this country feel that the only effective instrument of national reconstruction is the government. . . . Even granting for the sake of argument, that this view is correct, it does not take us a single step forward towards the solution of our problem, which is, how to activize the people. . . . The government has failed so far to inspire the people to action. I do not wish to be misunderstood. The government of its own initiative has no doubt done many things. . . . But I am not speaking of the centralized initiative of the government. I am speaking of the dispersed initiative of the people which when aroused would convert the great liability into a greater asset. . . . It is here that the government has almost totally failed.

Next we may consider the role of the political parties in this connection. . . . The parties are entirely and exclusively concerned with power. They all believe, without exception, that it is only the government that can do anything for the people. . . . Therefore they busy themselves either with the exercise or enjoyment of power or with winning of power. . . . Nothing could be calculated to make the people more helpless than this sort of approach. In this sense the parties do more harm than good. . . . Some of the opposition parties do attempt to mobilize mass action in the form of demonstrations and the like. But such things also teach the same lesson to the people that government alone can improve their lot and therefore they must act in order to compel it to give them what they want. . . . It is easy to stir up the masses for agitational ends, but rather difficult to persuade them to learn anything new to give up their prejudices, to work co-operatively together. In order to do this, it is necessary to go where the people are, live with them and patiently teach and help them to do what needs to be done. It is obvious that whoever thus goes to the people must first receive himself the



necessary knowledge and training. But mere training and knowledge would not do. The right spirit must be there—the spirit of service and sacrifice.—This means that they must be voluntary workers with the zeal and fire of a mission.

India is a vast country and the task of national reconstruction cannot be delayed. For this what is needed is a vast army of voluntary workers of the type described above. Gandhiji wanted such a worker for every village—six hundred thousand of *loka sevakas* (servants of the world). . . . The universal obsession with politics and power, however, thwart this channel of patriotic expression. . . . But should that mean that nothing further can or should be done? Are there not enough patriotic men and women in the country to recognize the need of the hour and come forward to offer their services to the country? I refuse to believe that it is not so.

I may be asked, What will the hundreds of thousands of volunteers do? Have I a programme of action? . . . If millions of backward people have to be moved, the programme must be very simple and tools and skills equally so. . . . Also a programme for the millions cannot be such that it requires much capital investment per individual, because capital is scarce in our country. Therefore, in the context of a mass constructive programme we cannot think in terms of any ambitious plans—not because of any ideological predilection but compelled by the given factors of the objective situation. The Chinese mass constructive programme is a very fine illustration. Neither Mao nor Chou is a Gandhian; yet the slogan in China is: every hand to work; all local materials and even the most primitive tools and skills be put to use.

In this light the Gandhian constructive programme, as developed and enlarged by Vinobaji, assumes a particular importance. It is in the villages of India that eighty per cent of her people live and it is there that local initiative has almost completely been killed. . . . Therefore, it is first and foremost to the villages that the voluntary workers must go. . . . The problem is about the village worker, the activist. Unless he is driven by idealism and a sense of mission the plans are not likely to yield the expected results.

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## 4

A COSMOPOLITAN COMMONWEALTH OF  
FREE MENM. N. ROY<sup>1</sup>

(M. N. Roy (1889-1954) who was an orthodox Marxist till 1940 began 'to look beyond communism' thereafter. From the mid-forties till his death he tried to develop 'a comprehensive philosophy which links up social and political practice with a scientific metaphysics of rationality and ethics, on the basis of a humanist interpretation of cultural history'. He advocated 'a social reconstruction of the world as a commonwealth and fraternity of free men, by the co-operative endeavour of spiritually emancipated moral men'. The education of the citizen, he thought, was the condition for this. (Roy, Reason, Romanticism and Revolution, Vol. I Preface, Vol. II, p. 310). Roy conceived the ideal society as a pyramidal structure based on local democracies. He envisaged its political organization on the foundation of direct participation of all adults through peoples' committees. An original thinker, he believed man is the measure of all things and individual freedom the supreme value. He derived his inspiration from the renaissance thinkers of Europe, but his thinking is also in tune with nineteenth century Indian renaissance, the outstanding representatives of which were Rammohun Roy and Ranade. One of the principal ingredients of Roy's humanism, which he liked to call 'radical', is its cosmopolitanism and utter freedom from all religious influences. He was probably the first man in Asia to conceive of an entirely decentralized, partyless, grass-roots, spiritual democracy ruled by morality and reason.—Editor.)

Man, with his mind, intelligence, will, remains an integral part of the physical Universe. The latter is a cosmos—a law-governed system. Therefore, man's being and becoming, his emotions, will, ideas are also determined: man is essentially rational. The reason in man is an echo of the harmony of the Universe. Morality must be referred back to man's innate rationality.—Morality emanates from the rational desire for harmonious and mutually beneficial social relations.—Radicalism thinks in terms neither of nation nor of class; its concern is man; it conceives freedom as freedom of the individual. . . . It is humanism en-

<sup>1</sup> M. N. Roy, *New Humanism*, pp. 48-58, 50, 60-5.



riched, reinforced and elaborated by scientific knowledge and social experience gained during the centuries of modern civilization.

It does not run after the utopia of internationalism, which presupposes the existence of autonomous National States. . . . A cosmopolitan commonwealth of free men and women is a possibility. It will be a spiritual community, not limited by the boundaries of National States . . . which will gradually disappear under the impact of cosmopolitan humanism. That is the radical prespective of the future of mankind.

Quest for freedom . . . accounts for the triumph of man over nature, in the course of his efforts to satisfy his biological needs. It provides the basis for his constant search for knowledge, which enables him to be progressively free from the tyranny of natural phenomena and physical and social environments. . . . Guided by the dictum of ancient wisdom that man is the measure of everything, the philosophy of the future should proclaim that the merit of any pattern of social organization or political institution is to be judged by the actual measure of freedom it gives to the individual.—Society is a creation of man—in quest of freedom. . . . The function of social relationship should be to secure for individuals as individuals, the maximum measure of freedom.

A new world of freedom will not result automatically from an economic reorganization of society. Nor does freedom necessarily follow from the capture of political power by a party claiming to represent the oppressed and exploited classes. The abolition of private property, state-ownership of the means of production, and planned economy do not by themselves end exploitation of labour, nor lead to an equal distribution of wealth. By disregarding individual freedom on the pleas of taking the fullest advantage of technology, of efficiency and collective effort, planned economy defeats its own purpose. Instead of ushering in a higher form of democracy on the basis of economic equality and social justice, it may establish a political dictatorship. Economic democracy is no more possible in the absence of political democracy than the latter is in the absence of the former.

It is assumed that planned economy will guarantee the greatest good to the greatest number; in other words, it will

mean equal distribution of wealth [and] establish social justice. In that case, it should be possible to reconcile planning with freedom. If modern technological trends preclude such reconciliation, then they should be curbed so as to be more amenable to human welfare. . . . Dictatorship of any form, however plausible may be the pretext for it, is excluded by the Radical-Humanist perspective of social evolution. Politics cannot be divorced from ethics without jeopardizing the cherished ideal of freedom. It is an empirical truth that immoral means necessarily corrupt the end.

Traditional democratic socialism also does not inspire any confidence of success. Democracy must reorientate itself. It must revert to the humanist tradition. It must not be limited by the counting of heads, particularly when the heads have not the opportunity to raise themselves with sovereign dignity. Formal parliamentarism must be replaced by actual democratic practice. The character of a party is to be judged not by its ability to catch votes, but by the merit of its proclaimed principles and published programme. . . . Under the formal parliamentary system, unscrupulous demagogues can always come to the top. Intelligence, integrity, wisdom, moral excellence, as a rule, count for nothing. Yet, unless the purifying influence of these human values is brought to bear upon the political organization and administration of society, the democratic way of life can never be realized.

Man must again be the measure of all things. Intelligence, integrity, wisdom, moral excellence, should be the test of leadership. The fundamental democratic principle—the greatest good to the greatest number—can be realized only when the conduct of public affairs will be in charge of spiritually free individuals who represent their own conscience before anybody or anything else.—Moral sanction, after all, is the greatest sanction. The real guarantee of parliamentary democracy is not law, but the moral conscience of the majority in power. Democracy must have that philosophical reorientation, if it is to survive the present crisis and resist the powerful onslaught of dictatorship.

Democratic practice should not be confined to periodical elections. Even if elections are by universal suffrage, and the executive is also elected, democracy will still remain a mere



formality. Delegation of power, even for a limited period, stultifies democracy. Government for the people can never be fully a government of the people and by the people.—The people can have a hand in the government only when a pyramidal structure of the state will be raised on a foundation of organized local democracies. The primary function of these latter will be to make individual citizens fully conscious of their sovereign right and enable them to exercise the right intelligently and conscientiously. The broad basis of the democratic state, coinciding with the entire society, will be composed of a network of political schools, so to say. The right of recall and referendum will enable organized local democracies to wield a direct and effective control of the entire state machinery. They alone will have the right to nominate candidates for election. Democracy will be placed above parties. Individual men will have the chance of being recognized, on their merit. Party loyalty and party patronage or other forms of nepotism will no longer eclipse intellectual independence, moral integrity and detached wisdom.

A new renaissance, based on rationalism, individualism and cosmopolitan humanism, is essential for democracy to be realized and made capable of defending itself.

In the transition period, a democratic constitution should provide for creative genius, intellectual detachment and moral integrity occupying a high place in the state, so as to advise, guide and influence the operation of executive power. In the transition period, democracy must be elective as well as selective. Until the intellectual and moral level of the entire community is raised considerably, election alone cannot possibly bring its best elements to the fore-front, and unless the available intellectual detachment and moral integrity are brought to bear upon the situation, democracy cannot come to her own.—During the transition period, residuary power should be vested in a Council of State representing men of science, intelligence, integrity, wisdom and moral excellence; men, who as a rule, keep aloof from the rough and tumble of politics.—Each professional group engaged in intellectual, literary, artistic and any other creative avocation, will recommend a specific number for membership of the Council of State. They will be nominated by the head of the state, who will have the prerogative also to nominate some other persons equally qualified, though not

formally attached to any particular group. The power of planning the development of society in all branches (economics, health, education, culture) and also to guide and supervise the execution of the plans, will be vested in the Council of State.

Radicalism presupposes economic reorganization of society, so as to eliminate the possibility of exploitation of man by man. Progressive satisfaction of material necessities is the precondition for the individual members of society unfolding their intellectual and other finer human attributes.—The economy of the new social order will be based on production for use and distribution with reference to human needs. Its political organization will exclude delegation of power, which in practice deprives the people of effective power. It will be based on the direct participation of the entire adult population through the People's Committees. Its culture will be based on universal dissemination of knowledge and incentive to scientific and all other kinds of creative activity. The new society, being founded on reason and knowledge, will necessarily be planned. But it will be planning with the freedom of the individual as its main objective. The new society will be democratic—politically, economically, as well as culturally. It will be a democracy capable of defending itself.

The ideal of Radical Democracy will be attained through the collective efforts of spiritually free men and women united in a political party with the determination of creating a new order of freedom. The members of the party will function as the guides, friends and philosophers of the people rather than as their would-be rulers.



# D

## DEMOCRACY AND SOCIALISM

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### I

## THE BASE FOR INDIAN DEVELOPMENT

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU<sup>1</sup>

*(Jawaharlal Nehru, as President Radhakrishnan rightly said, is 'a maker of modern India, who tried to put India on a progressive, scientific, dynamic and non-communal basis'. His greatest achievement was to put parliamentary democracy in India on a solid basis. The original state, according to Nehru, was a police state which preserved law and order, protected its citizens from foreign enemies and collected taxes to carry on its business. The civic ideal of common possession and common enjoyment of amenities transformed it into the modern state—a complex, paternal, socially functioning organism with several departments and spheres of activities. Thus it comes to confer more benefits on the individuals and so the individual has greater obligations towards it. If the individual and the state are both properly integrated and organized there would be no conflict between them. The ultimate aim of a state is development of human happiness and freedom, not only political, but economic and social. The state is to be judged by the opportunity its people have to make their own destinies. The modern nation state is based on compulsion or force; the government has to curb and prevent all group and individual tendencies which are inherently selfish and likely to injure society and to defend the state against outside attacks 'meeting force with force'. In the foreseeable future there is no prospect of the state fading away. A government is to be judged by its efficiency in raising the physical, spiritual and cultural standards of its people. Economic improvement, and national and individual freedom must be the ends of governments. But in a democratic society 'individual freedom must be balanced with social freedom and the relations of the individual with the social group'. It is dangerous as well as foolish to suppress individual opinions and ideas. Ideas do not die by being driven underground. There is always some conflict between individual liberty and the security and needs of the country and*

<sup>1</sup> Jawaharlal Nehru in R. K. Karanjia, *The Mind of Mr. Nehru*, pp. 56-7, 96-7, 67, 101.

*the community; but history is man's eternal struggle for freedom. 'I see man's repeated martyrdom and crucifixion but I see also the spirit of man rising again and again and triumphing over every adversity'. Such is in brief Nehru's political creed. (For details see M. N. Das, The Political Philosophy of Jawaharlal Nehru.) What follows may be understood against this background.—Editor.)*

[Our] main object is to increase production and thereby find progressively fuller employment for our people. We want to become an industrialized nation with greater production, greater income, more national and per capita income, and an independent and self-developing economy. The overall result we desire . . . is to break through the barrier of poverty and bring about better life, more happiness and prosperity for the millions of our people and, at the same time, try to organize a more egalitarian basis for society in India. Basically we have adopted a Socialist ideal built upon a planned co-operative economy, not Socialist in any rigid or dogmatic meaning of the word, but in a sense that is flexible and pragmatic. Also basic to our approach is what might be described as providing the human being, and individual as well as community, with the quality and character of a fully integrated person.

I am not at all embarrassed about being a Socialist or our objectives being Socialist. That should be the ideal of every sensible nation or society or individual. . . . Every individual should be given equal opportunity in a more or less egalitarian society with no great inequalities or disparities, at any rate none so far as opportunity is concerned. Both the extravagance of the rich or the poverty of the poor are vulgar and degrading and I want to eliminate them. . . . We have chosen parliamentary democracy and we have done so because it produces the best results in the long run. It is the result that counts in the end, though we consider it necessary that the means should be good.

The real issue is how far, in the changing circumstances of today, we have succeeded in building a solid base for our development. If there is such a solid base, a democratic base, a secular and socialistic base—that is, broadly a deep, sound and self-confident foundation for our ideals and approaches, I am not at all worried as to what happens at the top and who takes over. The necessity of a base is all that matters: for without it, you simply have nothing to build upon. And nothing can hap-



pen.—[By a 'base' is meant] first of all, the establishment of a democratic apparatus with adult franchise—that is, parliamentary democracy. Secondly, I think the secular foundation of our democracy. Then a sound base for economic development with the Five-Year Plans, and heavy industries, particularly machine-making plants, a strong public sector commanding the strategic heights of our economy, and the foundation for an independent, self-developing economy. You may say also Socialistic Pattern of Society based on the principles of gradual economic equalization and social justice.

Once the people are given a proper democratic base or moorings, it should be difficult for the mass of the people to be diverted or reversed. The pace of progress could be slowed down or accelerated, of course, but I don't think it would be possible to take a whole people backwards. . . . Our plans, the idea of planning itself, have set in motion certain forces which cannot be stopped or reversed. At the moment the best insurance against any throw-back is the 'hope level' of our people. It might be possible to frustrate this by making the people lose hope and faith. But once the Second and the Third Plans go into action, we shall be breaking through the static barrier of inertia, poverty and under-development and taking off—that is, our economy will begin to work on its own steam power. With this development backed by the will of the people, the effectiveness of which is secured through parliamentary democracy, it should not be difficult to maintain the continuity of our experiment.

[There is hope for success of democracy in India, because] I have always had great faith, tremendous confidence, in the Indian people as a whole, in . . . the masses. . . . They have a certain quality and character, a basic cultural tradition which makes them function. . . . They may be conservative, they may be backward in industrial techniques. They can mend or learn all that. But something more important and remarkable they possess and that is a certain quality of character which, I think, is of great value to them and to us.

## THE MEANING OF DEMOCRACY

HUMAYUN KABIR<sup>1</sup>

The term democracy is, and perhaps must be, used in divergent senses. . . . The crux of the problem, however, is to find a common characteristic, if any, in virtue of which the term democracy may be used to describe a series of situations or attitudes diverging from one another in many particulars. To my mind, this point of identity is supplied by a correlation between duties and rights. The one thing which distinguishes all the different political systems and ideologies which we call democratic is the urge to establish an equivalence if not identity between the two.

Two essential characteristics are found in all concepts of democracy and differentiate it from any other type of social organization. They are (a) the attempt to establish the equality of rights and duties for all members of a community and (b) the attempt to make rights and duties coincident.

We must, however, give a more precise meaning to the equality of rights. It involves equality of opportunity but does not necessarily involve equality of enjoyment. Individuals differ from one another in a thousand ways. They have their own likes and dislikes, their preferences and aversions. Equality of rights cannot obviously equalize tastes and distastes, but it can and must imply that each individual has equal opportunity of satisfying his or her legitimate claims.

Similarly, equality of duties does not mean identity of functions. Here again, individuals will differ according to their latent faculties and course of development. It would lead to obvious absurdities if the same services were required from individuals with different abilities. Nor is such a demand necessary. No society can survive without a multiplicity of functions and services requiring different types of aptitude and training. It is, however, necessary that they must all be performed in the manner best conducive to the maintenance and progress of social good. Equality of duties, therefore, would

<sup>1</sup> Humayun Kabir, *Science, Democracy and Islam*, pp. 25-36.



mean that whatever be the function of an individual in a society or state, his degree of obligation must be the same.

The analysis of democracy attempted above would help to resolve the seeming conflict between social versus political democracy.

If we remember that the equivalence of duties and rights is the differentia of a democracy, Russell's attempt to differentiate between the Anglo-Saxon and the Russian concepts of democracy must break down. The distinction between the rule of the majority and the interests of the majority can never be absolute. Wherever the majority rules, it is certain that but for stupidity or ignorance, the interests of the majority will prevail. The minority may at times arrogate to it all the wisdom of the community. It may claim and even believe that it is acting in the interests of the community as a whole. This may also hold for a brief period, but there is no record that consistently or over a long period, the minority has ruled in the interests of the community. Its interpretation of the communal interests has often been a rationalization of its own purposes and used to defeat the interests of the majority. It may indeed be said that the precise *raison d'être* of majority rule is to guarantee majority interests. The whole course of historical experience shows that any class or group permanently dissociated from the exercise of power is also permanently in a position of social and political inferiority.

If this is accepted, it is obvious that democracy cannot be merely a political concept designating methods of decision-making. It is a socio-political concept, designating conditions and methods as well as results of decision-making.—This is not a mere terminological problem but goes into the very essence of the concept of democracy. It is doubtful if a mere political democracy could ever exist. The attempt to give equality only in the political sphere would be defeated by the existence of inequalities in wealth, position, status and, most important of all, intelligence and education. . . . Political democracy is the best method of achieving the goal of social democracy. The contrary would not, however, be necessarily true. Even in the improbable contingency of achieving social democracy without political democracy, it could not continue to exist for very long. . . .

De Tocqueville's attempt to differentiate sharply between

democracy and socialism cannot be accepted. Socialists, or even communists, are right in their insistence that democracy necessarily implies the extension of the equality of rights from the political to the social and economic fields, that is, the abolition of privileges, the reduction of class distinctions, and perhaps even the socialization of the means of production. . . . It may be true that absolute equality in wealth is not necessary for maintaining political equality. It is, however, equally true that political equality becomes a mockery if inequalities in property range from those who have more wealth than they know how to use to those who do not have even the barest means of subsistence.

Another distinction between democracy and socialism prone to be exaggerated is the role of individual enterprise. . . . In a *laissez-faire* society, the individual is supposed to have independence. As has been pointed out more than once, this freedom is very often nothing more than a freedom to starve. Deprivation of the means of livelihood places very real limitations upon the supposed freedom of an individual in a free society. . . . We have to remember another fact. In no society, whether free or otherwise, can a human being be regarded on the analogy of an undifferentiated unit in a complex. Even supposing that an individual is initially free, he is tied down by his own act of choice. . . . The moment he has chosen a vocation, he performs certain social functions and will prosper only so far as he acts as an agent or instrument of social policy. An individual who is continually fighting against social trends or attempting to reverse decisions which he himself has taken, would be much more of a cypher than one who accepts social obligations and carries them out to the best of his ability.

From the opposite point of view, one could argue with equal validity that the scope of individual independence is not and cannot be ruled out even in a socialist state. In a socialist, no less than in a capitalist state, there must be planners, executives and executants. Someone must attempt to anticipate the future in the light of past experience. Someone must try to devise concrete measures to carry out policies in the light of such anticipations. Someone must be there to carry out the particular acts which follow from the adoption of the plan. . . . Again, when an individual accepts fully and freely any role assigned to him, he



has no sense of constraint in carrying out the actions which follow from the adoption of that role. Nothing gives a greater sense of freedom and creative activity than acceptance of one's station and its duties. It is division of mind and uncertainty about one's objectives that cause hesitation and a sense of frustration. Where, therefore, the objectives of the socialist state are fully and freely accepted, socialism would act not as a factor of constraint but of liberation and release of energies.

What is interesting to note in this connection is that the protagonists of 'democracy' and 'socialism' are, in spite of their violent disagreement about the relative values of liberty and equality, at one in their dissociation of means from ends. The 'democrat' emphasizes liberty and insists that whatever be the result, the method of taking decisions is what matters. So long as the appearance of a free political decision is there, it is immaterial to him whether the consequences bring social justice or not. In other words, he is concerned only with the means and not with the end. Equally, the 'socialist' who insists that equality must be established in every sphere of life, whatever be the method adopted for achieving it, is prepared to flaunt his adherence to the view that the end justifies the means. Thus the two agree in the divorce of means from ends even though to one it is the means that alone matters and to the other, the end.

Without entering into a metaphysical discussion on this point, it may, however, be stated that all such attempts at divorce of ends and means have resulted in contradictions. Ends and means together constitute a unit. Any attempt to judge one element independently of the other invariably leads to imperfect, if not false, conclusions. Such attempts at divorce between the two are based on the uncritical assumption that all relations are external and that elements remain unaltered whether within or outside a context. Even if this should ultimately be so, no one has a right to assume it without examination. Experience shows that elements are in fact determined—at least partially—by the context in which they occur. Hence, dissociation of means from ends or ends from means cannot but lead to erroneous conclusions.

We may sum up the result of our discussion in the three following statements:—(i) Democracy means a continual attempt at equalization of rights and duties for all; (ii) It is a continual process and we cannot foresee its end in any conceivable future;

(iii) Means and ends cannot be divorced from one another without violence to the meaning of each.

## 3

## THE EMERGENT PATTERN OF POLITICS IN A POSITIVE STATE

ASOKA MEHTA<sup>1</sup>

### *The Politics of Socialism*

A state, according to the exponents of this point of view, is ultimately governed by those elements and interests in society that are economically the most powerful. Those who control the economic life, those in whose favour the property relations are organized, those who stand to benefit by the organization of the forces of production, they ultimately decide the character of the state.

By and large, such an analysis is true. But it is true to the extent the common people have not succeeded in obtaining adult franchise, in winning civil liberties for all, and in getting the structure of the state suffused with various forms of associative life, various forms of democratic organizations. If the structure of the state remains wholly dominated by autocratic or bureaucratic impulses, such a state cannot have positive content. But if, through the organization of local and functional autonomy, whether it be village *panchayats*, whether it be trade unions, whether it be co-operatives, the state has been transformed, there is then a different tale to tell.

A web of associative life, a state conceived in terms of a network of community organizations, will be a democratic state. If these factors are absent, there is no doubt that the state might become a class state. The state can become an instrument of oppression in the hands of the ruling class over the ruled, but if the people are alert, if the people are organized, if they have built up and cherished democratic traditions, the state would succeed in developing positive content. It is my contention that

<sup>1</sup> Asoka Mehta, *Democratic Socialism*, pp. 53-5, 70, 156, 160, 170-1, 173, 176; *Studies in Asian Socialism*, pp. 94-6, 98; *Politics of Planned Economy*, pp. 6-8, 15-16, 39-43.



only a positive state can be a socialist state. No matter what class is in power, socialism is inconceivable except in terms of a positive state. Socialism in a negative state must result in a distortion, a caricature, a falsification of all that socialism stands for.

Where a positive state exists, or can be created, it would be a sign of weakness to develop a strategy framed on the basis of a class state.—A political party in a multi-party state is a voluntary association . . . a free association of men who may not always think alike, but who are determined to act alike.—A democratic party can exist only where there is room for more than one party. It is absurd to talk of one-party state and say that the one party will be democratic, because, the essence of democracy is that you can withdraw and start a new party enshrining a new point of view, adumbrating a different policy.

### *The State, Man and Ethics*

The totalitarians, on principle, refuse to recognize the autonomy of any sphere of life. It is the essence of democratic philosophy, as Jefferson was wont to aver, to provide as a rallying point, 'the inalienable right to be different'.—While the state will have primacy, it cannot have supremacy.—The pluralist theory, therefore, argues that we must view the society as a web of associations, and the state cannot violate the autonomy of other organizations. The powers of the state have to be limited. They are limited by the fact that other organizations have their own autonomous significance and hence their own independence.

There is not the least doubt that division of labour, the division of society into classes, the development of economic life, the organization of productive forces, the arrangement of property relations—all these undoubtedly influence and shape human nature.—There are other autonomous forces that also operate, for instance, your own ideas. . . . Every man is an end in himself. That no human being has a right to use another person to achieve his ends, even ends surcharged with social significance, becomes the corner-stone of humanism.

My second point is more important. There are certain absolutes. . . . It is my contention that human nature is partly relative and partly absolute. There are certain parts of human nature and certain aspects of ethics, defining relations between

man and man, that never change.—Thousands of years of man's pilgrimage through life have discovered a few such absolutes: Self-culture, the autonomy of individuals, the sacredness and inviolability of human personality.

The third point that needs to be remembered is that the social unit is always a self, a focus of being, an individuality. Truths and values are not incarnated in any unity but only in the units. Social or political unity is a convenient fiction, the reality is always the individual.—These are the considerations that prompt some humanists to aver that socialism, to be true, must be a residence of values.—The above arguments lead to the necessity of utopianism.<sup>1</sup> It provides a measuring rod for the achievements, a perch from which to gain an all-inclusive view.

Asia's large population, limited resources and retarded development make utopianism not a mere adventure in faith but the only hopeful avenue of progress. Loving care of ravished land, devoted dovetailing of men's labour alone can compensate for the gaping scarcity of capital. The whole approach has to be intensive, small in area but deep in effort, not extensive as in new and virgin worlds. Where not the might of a giant but the finish of a jeweller is needed, work has to be a species of the genus of love.—The covenant between Nature and Man is the core of Asian culture. All development must base itself on this asset.—It does not, however, mean that with its acceptance Asia's quest for socialism comes to an end. In agrarian countries with pressure of population and paucity of capital, utopian socialism has much to teach, but its neglect of industrialization makes it a partial solution.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> By this Mehta means the type of socialism imbued with ethical awareness and community spirit advocated by Gandhi and Bhawe. Buber too influenced him.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> Mehta says there are three ways of capital formation in underdeveloped countries: (1) The traditional capitalist method which uproots and pushes peasants out of villages through a policy of enclosure and forces them to work in industries to facilitate the extraction of surplus labour; (2) the method of Stalin, viz. collectivization of agriculture and rapid industrialization through slave labour; and (3) to persuade people to co-operate willingly by working hard, saving and investing. The people should be free to determine on what basis and to what extent savings must be made and in what sectors they should be invested. In a democracy, Mehta asserts, there must be faith in the people and they must be freely allowed to decide the pace and tempo of development and the transformation of the economy. (*Democratic Socialism*, pp. 128-31.)—Ed.



*The Politics of Planned Economy*

Obvious practical difficulties in reconciling the claims of planning and of democracy are sought to be overcome through the organization of new institutions free from the limitations and a deeper theoretical understanding of freedom and planning.

Democracy in an age of planning is confronted with an almost paradoxical task.<sup>1</sup> On the one hand, the dynamic and critical powers of the party system are to be strengthened. On the other hand, the parties must become aware of their collective responsibility and of the limits to opposition within any comprehensive plan of social reform.—Both a theoretical analysis of the relations between economic planning and political democracy as also the study of the new institutions that are being created, like the Public Corporations and the new trade unions, lead one to the irresistible conclusion of the need to conceive political work in terms of 'areas of agreement' and 'areas of dispute'. It may not be easy to adjust oneself to co-operation in some spheres of activity and determined opposition in the other. It is quite possible that such a dual attitude might fatally weaken the egoism of a group, class or a party. But it is the burden of our theme that the new civilization developing around us demands such a weakening and the emergence of a new attitude capable of expressing itself simultaneously in co-operation and controversy in different spheres of thought and action.

There is a tendency in every group to become sovereign. Democracy, with its delicate adjustments, gets out of hinge unless the instinctive aggressiveness of groups is checked. . . . What is true of other groups, is true of political parties. They too strive to seep into other activities and organizations, and to use them for their own ends or rather aggrandisement. As every group has its legitimate bounds, whose overstepping weakens other groups, so has a political party its limits which need to be recognized for free and balanced life.

Can political parties accept such limitations and survive? That depends on the temper of the people. . . . If popular understanding is educated to demand further limitations of the power of political action, the spilling over by political parties into

<sup>1</sup> Earlier, following Mannheim, Mehta argued that unless rival social groups voluntarily created a unified political will, the challenge of totalitarianism would not be met.—Ed.

other activities and organizations would be considerably reduced. Such an education would be facilitated if democratic parties agree to limit their areas of operation, or in other words, to seek areas of agreement that become 'out of bounds' for party politics. . . . Parties like the communists, whose sole purpose is to destroy pluralism and thereby build up totalitarian control, run counter to the very fount of our theme. As there can be no understanding between the neck and the noose, so there can be no exploration of areas of agreement with the communists. Politics of pluralism can develop only between democratic parties.

It is obvious that constructive activities should be taken out of the arena of party politics. . . . Such activities have to be organized in a manner where their development is the sole objective, where none strives for political gains. This limitation has to be accepted especially by the party in power because only its willingness to withdraw from positions of party advantage in the constructive field will evoke confidence and ultimately prove contagious. Party rivalry, or communal or linguistic rivalry in constructive activities fatally divides initiative, weakens efforts and saps enthusiasm. . . . To de-politicalize certain activities is the beginning of democratic planning. . . . About other activities and policies, efforts should be made, wherever possible, to develop methods that might foster co-operation; where the points of view are sharply divided, the opposition needs to be firmly brought out. . . . Joint, or de-politicalized, effort need not be confined in a democracy to constructive activities. Any wider activity can be so organized.

## 4

## INDIAN REPUBLIC, A MORAL ENTITY

ZAKIR HUSSAIN<sup>1</sup>

Under Gandhiji's leadership our political activity acquired a moral purpose, and before we became independent and able to

<sup>1</sup> Selections from Zakir Hussain, Inaugural Address to the All India Political Science Conference, December 1963, pp. 4-13.



think in terms of a sovereign state, we had committed ourselves in a way to the concept of the state as a moral entity. This, you will agree, is extremely significant. The state, as you know, has been idealized, it has been worshipped; no deity could claim to have had the offering of such a plenitude of sacrifices at its altar. But the state so idealized and worshipped has inflicted untold suffering on mankind, because it was conceived as being beyond good and evil, beyond morality, an absolute end in itself. Perhaps our tradition, if it erred, erred on the right side, in regarding moral principle as a higher value than political security and social solidarity which took the form of an absolute state. In conceiving of India as a welfare state, we restore the balance. We owe allegiance to a state which has all the qualities of a sovereign body, which is not subject to principles outside itself but embodies these very principles in its aims and in its structure. It commands our loyalty and our devotion not only in the name of nationalism or patriotism, but even more because it is the expression of our spiritual heritage, the demand of our conscience.—We, however, brought into being something very complex, very delicate. Our state will maintain its moral nature, its integrity, only if we keep a continuous watch on ourselves and on those instruments with the help of which we hope to steer our course towards the goal which, in the nature of things, will keep on receding, for the ideals of virtue and justice can never be fully realized.

Our state, even as a moral entity, is an embodiment of power. This power has to be effective; it has also to be distributed, so that no citizen of our state is deprived of his share. It has to be concealed, so that the state and the machinery of government retain their moral quality; it has to find appropriate expression, so that the personality of the state remains recognizable. There can be over-emphasis on power in the interest of the state as a state; there can be abdication of power for the sake of moral principle. One course will distort the moral nature of the state, the other endanger its physical existence. Our future depends, therefore, on discovering the golden mean between these two extremes, and on making our thought and action an expression of harmony between political necessity and moral obligation.

Today it is not only laws and specified duties that would maintain order and progress, but an awareness in every citizen that he is party to an agreement to co-operate with the administration and with his fellow-citizens in the common interest.—We have not eradicated the old tendency to look upon the government as the party that is in duty bound to give, and the citizen—all his constitutional duties notwithstanding—as the partly entitled to receive.

The administration has to face difficulties because it has to fulfil not only its administrative but its moral obligations without that spontaneous and effective support which it needs for the efficient performance of its tasks.—Much could be achieved if we made our people aware of the historical process of which our welfare state is the result, if we could make it clear that our state is not imposing any new moral obligations, but only asking for the fulfilment in a larger and more effective sense of what we have acknowledged as morally binding throughout the ages.—The creation of this awareness . . . should be part of our study of the working of democracy among a people with an acknowledged diversity of culture.

The necessity for the acceptance and fulfilment of moral obligations would become obvious if we could convince our people that democracy is not attained once for all time. It can deteriorate, it can be transformed into something opposite, into some form of totalitarianism, if we are not constantly on our guard.—For instance, as between men and policies we may incline more and more towards choosing men. Policies do, after all, depend on those who carry them out, and it can be argued that the wrong type of man cannot carry out a good policy. But in choosing a policy we establish a standard by which those entrusted with its execution can be judged, and in choosing persons we create a loyalty that can militate against adherence to a wise policy. There is a danger, however, in choosing policies also, if we proceed on the assumption that political truth is not attainable by all, but only by the majority, and regard numbers as the most relevant fact in political life.—This can lead to what is the greatest danger in democracy, that the majority should claim to possess the monopoly both of persons and of policies, of political truth as well as power.

It is one of the basic anomalies of political life that the bul-



warks of the state, nationalism and patriotism, should also be its weakest points. Identify nationalism with race, culture, religion, and it becomes a principle of disintegration and fragmentation. We have seen that happen in several countries of central Europe. National minorities were made into nation-states, but they again had minorities within their body politic, and these were a means either of exposure to foreign attack or further fragmentation. Nationalism can become equally insidious if it is identified with persons and policies representing the majority, if it becomes a kind of test which is imposed on those who happen to be in a minority, and who are liable to lose both their political and their moral status as a result of this test. Patriotism can easily mislead us into believing that what our own nation aims at is morally good and those who oppose our national policies are evil. This position is morally indefensible and intellectually untenable and conduces in practice to a distortion of judgement, hysteria and crusading frenzy.—But, if we put too strong moral curbs on nationalism and patriotism, do we not run the risk of promoting indifference to causes which are national and patriotic not only in a political, but equally in a moral sense? The risk is there, of course, but it will be minimized if our approach to nationalism and patriotism is not logical and direct, but organic and indirect, if we do not impose nationalism and patriotism as direct obligations but induce and strengthen the growth of sentiments that create solidarity and make spontaneous, concerted political and moral action a part of our nature.—The problems that these questions raise . . . are moral and philosophic, and their solution requires not only deep thought but imagination, faith and understanding.—By faith I do not mean any kind of dogma and orthodoxy. I am thinking primarily of the nature of the opinions we hold.—The diversity of cultures in India is a fact, that this diversity should be maintained is an opinion, and if this opinion governs our conduct, if it is something we all can rely upon for our mutual benefit, it becomes what I would call our faith. And I would say that our future as a people depends on this faith being real, on our being convinced that cultural autonomy, the simultaneous development of all our languages and cultures, the confidence among the various groups and communities that their rights are equal and that none among them will attempt to

dominate over any other politically, economically or socially, will of a surety generate and reinforce and vitalize that solidarity which is the ideal of nationalism and patriotism, of true freedom and democracy.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The similarity between this 'faith' and what Aurobindo called 'the theory and principle and the actual constitution of India Polity', may be noted. *Vide supra*, p. 147—Editor.



# E

## ALTERNATE WAYS

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### I

## THE IDEOLOGY OF HINDU NATIONALISM

M. S. GOLWALKAR<sup>1</sup>

Let us see the divine in collective life, and worship that primeval Being manifested in society without expectation and with utter humility.—The same collective Being permeates our Motherland, equally from the Himalayas to Kanya Kumari.—People should acquire a firm conviction that only by seeing God's worship in every act of social service can we easily solve the acute problems which face us to-day.—A collective effort on the part of our entire society is needed in order to raise the general level of our social existence. This collective effort to solve our problems in their entirety can be marshalled only by a disciplined organization which is well-knit, pure, endowed with character, and which joins the hearts and heads of millions.

Our starting point is man. Let us then create the proper type of man.—Our *Varṇāśrama* system, after all, is the best order for achieving human happiness.—The feeling of inequality, of high and low, which has crept into the *Varṇa* system, is not proper.—The present notions of inequality and discrimination, therefore, are not characteristic of the *Varṇāśrama* system, but only its degradation. We shall have to liquidate these notions.—The order that must inevitably and naturally prevail in human society is our own social order. Even those who loudly trumpeted individual liberty, had to accept collec-

<sup>1</sup> Selections from *Shri Guruji, The Man and His Mission*, pp. 43-4, 50-6, 64, 65, 67.

M. S. Golwalkar is the leader of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (established 1925); a right-wing Hindu organization alleged to be aggressive. It is reported to have a million followers. Its ideology is similar to that of the two political parties: The Hindu Mahasabha (founded, 1919) and the Jana Sangh (founded 1951). The RSS itself is not a party, but seeks to foster Hindu solidarity and nationalism.—Ed.

tivism and the doctrine of heredity. And the protagonists of collectivism have had to veer towards individual liberty. The *Varna* system alone achieves a proper synthesis of the three elements.

To put this unique social order of ours in practice and work it smoothly, and to demonstrate to the world at large that this system alone can secure universal welfare, the first pre-requisite is the creation of a self-possessed, conscious and powerful nation which will undertake the experiment. This is the foremost as well as the ultimate task we have to perform.

Hindu culture advocates that a successful social order should have at its helm men who live in the knowledge of *Brahman*, men who can merge their individuality with humanity, men who have conquered their passions and wants, men who ardently believe that to serve humanity is to serve God.—When this state is reached, there is no need for government laws or the other coercive apparatus to keep citizens under control, and maintain social order. . . . To-day also people dream of the withering away of the state. But they do not seem to know how they propose to hold all individuals together in a social whole after the state has been done away with. They are unable to find a correct solution because they refuse to accept *Dharma* as the foundation of all social life.

But how are we going to sustain society so long as that stage is not reached? Hindu culture has admitted that till then the state is indispensable.—While admitting the need for the state, they also realized that a state without checks and controls will be more a source of misery than of happiness. They, therefore, placed our rulers under the control of selfless and disinterested persons.—It does not need much intelligence to imagine the havoc which the state can create, once it becomes inflated by a combination of political power with economic power.—Hindu political thought and practice have kept economic power away from the hands of the state and deprived people with wealth of all political power. The two powers have thus been interdependent and mutually corrective. These two powers have again been subjected to the supervision of such selfless men as have no axe to grind.

The universe is concentric. We must also set our state to that pattern, forming progressively expanding circles going



outwards from the same centre.—Each one of our villages should be a centre round which a circle draws other villages into one intimate community. Larger communities can evolve round these basic units according to geographical contiguity and factors of trade and commerce.—Our scheme of government has always been federal, with the village as its basic unit. Our *pancas* have always voiced the feelings of our people.—Who are the five *pancas*? Four representatives, one each from the four *Varṇas*, and a fifth one representing the forestdwellers, constitute the *Pancāyat*. That is our fundamental formula for state-formation.—Only a Government constituted of such groups—call them by any name, *Varṇa*, Guild, Syndicate or Trade Union—can genuinely safeguard the interests of all sections of the population and help develop the special character of each group.—This form of government should be carried further, developing from bottom upward. The representatives of one *Varṇa* or trade should form a Body of Representatives to govern its limited sphere of interests. A larger Body of Representatives could grow over and around the first body to govern larger spheres, and so on. This is, roughly speaking, the main principle.

The real source of our strength is the territorial integrity of our motherland stretching from the Himalayas to the seas, the Hindu society that dwells in this land as the child of that motherland, and the harmonious life of that society derived from a single tradition and woven out of a variety of castes, creeds, sects and languages. We must constantly impress this aspect of our national life on our people.—When we talk of the Hindu Nation, many people wonder as to what will happen to those who live in *Bhārat* but who do not call themselves Hindus. We, however, feel that they should call themselves Hindus and be proud of the Hindu heritage. They can certainly worship Lord Jesus or Hazrat Mohammed, but they need not change their way of life on that account.

## COMMUNIST POLICY AND PLANS

AJOY KUMAR GHOSH<sup>1</sup>

A question which has been posed by many is: Have you, communists, adopted peaceful means as a creed or as a tactic, i.e. a manoeuvre?—Our frank reply to such a question is: It is neither.—To accept non-violence as a creed means to assert that we are certain that under no conditions and at no stage in the development of the struggle for socialism, the ruling classes will resort to arms with a view to thwart the will of the majority of the people; that, in all situations they will observe democratic conventions and respect the democratic verdict of the people. Only those who have unbounded faith in the bona fides of the bourgeoisie and landlords can make such an assertion.—As for peaceful methods being just a 'tactic', everyone knows that ours is not a party that says one thing and means another. Communists have never hesitated to express their views in the clearest terms.

What then is the position?—Do we say that since the ruling classes have not been known to surrender peacefully, therefore, violence and civil war are inevitable?—No. We consider that in the present historical condition, the possibility exists in many countries of achieving socialism peacefully and of defeating attempts of the ruling classes to force civil war on the people. The possibility exists of parties and elements who stand for socialism securing a majority in Parliament and overcoming the resistance of reaction by means of mass action. And we shall try our utmost to make this possibility a reality in our country.—In other words, peaceful methods for us are neither a creed nor a tactic. It is a policy—a seriously meant policy.

<sup>1</sup> Ajoy Kumar Ghosh, *Articles and Speeches*, pp. 91-4, 238-9.

The Communist Party of India established in 1925 had a membership of 177,501 in 1959, and ranked as the second biggest party in terms of votes polled in the 1962 elections. According to the Preamble to its present Constitution adopted in 1958, the Party 'strives to achieve full democracy and socialism by peaceful means'. The implications of this are explained in this extract. A. K. Ghosh died in 1962. In 1964 the Party split into two: CPI and CPI (Marxist). The latter modified the 1958 Constitution and dropped its Preamble.—Ed.



As for the contention that communists are 'totalitarian' and would destroy democracy if they come to power, we need not go very far to refute it. Recent experience in our own country shows who merely profess democracy and who practise it. In Kerala, the communist-led Ministry had, only a few weeks ago, to rely on a one-vote majority in the Assembly. Yet it never failed to accord full democratic liberties to the opposition parties.—Some gentlemen demand that in order to 'prove' that we are serious about peaceful methods and about democracy, we must eschew Marxism-Leninism.—What does this demand mean? It means that we should give up that philosophy which has enabled our Party to acquire its present position. It means that we should cease to be communists and declare our faith in Sarvodaya.—One of the fundamental teachings of Marxism-Leninism is that socialism can be established only through a revolution, i.e. conquest of power by the working people led by the working class. During the last ten years, this lesson has been driven home to the people of our country—the lesson that the bourgeoisie and landlords cannot establish socialism, that there can be no socialism unless the working people wield state power. To eschew Marxism-Leninism means, therefore, to eschew socialism itself.

Some of our critics have taken exception to our reassertion of proletarian internationalism. They tell us: 'This shows your extraterritorial loyalty'.—What, however, are the facts? No Communist Party desires to interfere in the affairs of the Party of another country. Every Communist Party is sovereign and independent in the sense that it determines its line of action on the basis of its own understanding of the situation in its country. At the same time, no genuine communist can subscribe to the so-called theory of 'national communism'.—The bond that unites the Communist Parties of all countries has nothing mysterious about it. We communists have a common ideology—Marxism-Leninism. We have a common objective—the establishment of socialism and communism. We have many common tasks—the defence of peace, freedom for all peoples, defence of the gains of socialism. Common ideology, common objectives, many common tasks—it is these that constitute the foundation of the unity of the international communist movement. It is not surprising, therefore, that communists of all countries build

relations of fraternal co-operation and strive to learn from each other's experience.—We regard the spirit and concept of proletarian internationalism as one of the most precious assets that the communist movement has given to humanity.

In our Party the tendency is strong which equates a peaceful path with parliamentarism, a tendency which has resulted in the concept that advance of the toiling masses towards the conquest of power may be achieved through successive elections, in each of which we shall grow gradually stronger. It is a concept which takes parliamentary democracy for granted and envisages no serious danger to it—at least for a long period, and visualizes a process of smooth and continuous advance through free and fair elections in the bourgeois liberal spirit.—In essence, this is a reformist and even revisionist concept. It gives rise to such reformist practices as neglect of mass work among the peasantry and the tendency to look upon masses not as fighters but only as voters, of making work in legislatures a substitute for mass action, instead of linking the two.—The reformist essence of this formulation lay in the fact that it held out the prospect of smooth advance towards power. It did not visualize a furious assault on democracy as social contradictions sharpen, as the mass movement develops and we grow stronger—an assault which may lead to a veritable crisis of parliamentary democracy.

While waging a determined struggle against the forces of the extreme reaction we have, at the same time, to combat those policies of the government which are harmful<sup>1</sup> for our country and strive to change them. We have to work for the policies which would be consistently anti-imperialist, anti-feudal and democratic.

<sup>1</sup> Ghosh thinks Indian foreign policy is good in so far as it is for peace, disarmament and anti-colonialism, but has to be defended and made consistent. He believes our political independence is now on a firmer economic foundation, but feels it necessary to extend the public sector further and democratize it. Defence and extension of democratic rights to people, ensuring that agrarian reforms benefit the mass of the peasantry and fight against the inroads of foreign private capital—these are included in communist policy (*ibid.*, pp. 166, 168, 173).—Ed.



## GANDHISM AND COMMUNISM

E. M. NAMBOODIRIPAD<sup>1</sup>

Abolition of private property (property in land to begin with); the pooling of the entire landed property of a village into the common property of the village community; the common cultivation of all the village lands and equitable distribution of the produce of the land; organization of cottage industries and other means of livelihood in the common interest of the people of the village—such, in short, is the picture of the new villages visualized by Vinoba Bhave when he speaks of Grāmdān. . . . This, therefore, can correctly be called the application [to the main problems of the post-independence era in our country] of those very principles which Gandhiji has applied to the problems of our country in the years of its anti-imperialist struggle. The objective which Bhave placed before the people is as revolutionary as any socialist or communist would have; it is that very basic principle, 'from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs', which, according to the Marxists, can be applied only in the higher phase of socialism, or its communist phase.<sup>2</sup> However, this objective has to be realized—through persuasion and change of heart. This is the essence of Grāmdān or Gandhism at its latest phase; and it is here that it differs from Marxism. . . . This, however, is not conceded either by the Congress leaders or by such parties of the left as the Communist Party, the PSP, etc. . . . They point out that these transformations cannot be brought about except through the use of state machinery. . . . They do not consider it as a substitute for governmental action by way of land reforms, organization of the co-operative movement, etc. . . . For the communists, socialists and other leftists, it is clear to them that political power is an essential factor in the struggle for socio-economic transformations. As the founders of Marxism had declared a century ago, no class voluntarily renounces power; an individual here or an individual there may be roused by the noble preaching of a Bhave or some other idealist and

<sup>1</sup> E. M. S. Namboodiripad, *The Mahatma and The Ism*, pp. 125, 128, 129.

<sup>2</sup> Vinoba Bhave also thinks that while there is 'nearness between the two ideologies' of Sarvodaya and communism, the former absolutely insists on non-violent means. (*AICC Economic Review*, IX, 1957, p. 31.)—Ed.

renounce power and property; but the landlords, the capitalists, and other exploiting classes will not, as a class, willingly subject themselves to the social transformations dreamed of by visionaries and fought for by practical revolutionaries.

## 3

## THE SWATANTRA PLATFORM

*Democracy and Socialism: Peoples' Status*C. RAJAGOPALACHARI<sup>1</sup>

The external feature by which democracy is recognized in modern conditions is the holding of periodical elections. Elections have one purpose in democracy, quite another purpose in socialistic regimes.—In democracies the people give their votes nominating who shall work for them in government offices and occasionally guide them. In socialism the people vote to decide under whom the majority would like to be indentured labourers. This is so because socialism is state ownership and control of the means of production and control also of the results of production. This being so, in between, who do the production? Who but indentured workers under indentured discipline as in all cases where everything is owned by another and the workers only work? If socialism has not been completely but only partially put in force, i.e. in a mixed economy, to that extent the government are masters and the people slaves—slaves because they cannot opt out as freemen could do. The constitution is itself the indenture. In 'democratic socialism' the ballot will be periodically held as before, but to decide who will be your masters—a new idea in elections. Your status is settled, the only choice left is as to who shall be your masters.

The Swatantra<sup>2</sup> Party's dedicated task is to oppose this loss of freedom that is proposed and is being imposed by a group of

<sup>1</sup> C. Rajagopalachari, Speeches on Feb. 1-2, 1964; article in *Swarajya*, Vol. VIII, No. 35.

<sup>2</sup> This Party was founded in 1959. Its important leaders are C. Rajagopalachari, N. G. Ranga and M. R. Masani, all of whom were once Congressmen and still claim to be Gandhians. It is the most important non-communal liberal democratic party. The leaders of this party argue that the



people who have adopted this plan after being placed in power by Gandhi. The task is to rouse a hypnotized people to a sense of the danger, and to take action to avert it. Achievement is not an easy thing when those ranged against you have seized all authority and economic power such as a state-socialist regime gives to those in authority.—We have to educate the people to realize that it is not good to hand over the responsibility of wealth production to the government, that individuals working as free individuals hoping to gain something out of that work will alone work steadily and arduously, and vigilantly guard the results of that work against being lost or stolen. We have to educate not only the innocent members of the ruling faction, but all the people to realize that national prosperity is not made in the secretariat or in Planning Commission's office but in the field and the factory and that too only when it is managed by some one personally interested in it.—We have to make people realize that concentration of economic power in the hands of a private party is bad, but it is no less bad but a little worse if it is concentrated everywhere in the hands of the central Congress Party or in those who regularly supply funds to it. We have to educate the people to realize the danger in letting all economic and political power concentrate in the hands of a single political party and make them see that democracy will disappear if that should happen, leaving only the crust of external forms, the reality gone.

### *'Democratic tyranny'*

The policy of the Indian National Congress, which is now passed off as democratic socialism, should be more aptly described as democratic tyranny. Democratic tyranny has its own technique. It puts on a façade of benevolence for the common man and the government seeks to assume all manner of powers under this pretext. The evils inherent in such a move would not befall the people immediately, for the government would go about the task of tightening the noose around their neck when it suited them.—The tiger pounces on you when it thinks fit, after arming

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Congress Party and Nehru have introduced statism and Sovietism into India and that the freedom of the peasants, workers, artisans, traders and intellectuals is being endangered thereby. See N. G. Ranga, *Freedom in Peril*, The Indian Peasants Institute, New Delhi, 1961.—Editor.

itself with all the advantages. It is against this attitude of the government that people should strongly protest as one man. I fear the people, despite the dark history of [Chinese] invasion and despotism, would do just the reverse and wait for the danger to come right up to their doors before waking up and registering their protest.—When any one of us is in trouble, it means that everybody is in trouble. We should all learn to rise as one man against injustice and tyranny and co-operate with each other to get justice. I am sure our people will do this at least now.

### *Swatantra Objectives*

The Congress has no respect for honesty, and *dharma* has vanished and money has become the real god. I want to break this idol, and resurrect *dharma*.—We want the aims of socialism, that the living conditions of the poor should be made much better, to be fulfilled in reality and not merely sounded in empty slogans. We want industrialization to come more effectively and extensively to the rescue of unemployment. We want the production of the basic necessities of life in our country to be increased, so that the problem of scarcity in this respect should no longer remain unsolved. We want more prosperity within the limits of the potentialities of our nation, so that there may be more satisfactory and more even distribution of it at all layers of the social body. We want these things to be done without incitement of class conflict. This would be possible only if production is considerably increased through sustained encouragement of those who have to work in various ways and contribute their savings to this purpose. We want national resources to be computed and national investments planned thereupon, without succumbing to the ruinous temptation of gigantism. The cold war having changed its pattern we should not depend on foreign aid being available beyond the limits of repayment.

### *Swatantra Pattern of Government*

#### A PARTY RESOLUTION<sup>1</sup>

The Swatantra Party claims to base its pattern of government on the test suggested by Mahatma Gandhi—whether any step

<sup>1</sup> Swatantra Party resolution passed on February 3, 1964.



contemplated by a government was to be of use to the poorest and the weakest members of the community.—Declaring that it is neither for *laissez-faire* nor against planning, the party reiterates its stand that all planning should be devised and carried out within the framework of the freedoms guaranteed in the Constitution.—There is urgent need for a proper order of priorities starting with increase in production and provision of elementary necessities such as pure drinking water, food, clothing, shelter and employment.—The role of the state and free enterprise would be redefined. The party would guarantee the incentive of legitimate gain under conditions of competition among producers, eliminate monopoly in both sectors, reduce to the minimum government controls, maintain stable prices and revise the taxation policy.

*Can Socialism be attained without Class-war?*

M. RUTHNASWAMY<sup>1</sup>

The whole history of socialism culminating in Russian communism shows that this is not possible. And can a struggle between an over-whelmingly strong political party against a helpless business or industry, with no strong political party behind it, be called a movement without conflict or war? It is as if Hitler's proceedings against Poland were to be called a peaceful incorporation of Poland in Germany or as if the present status of East Germany under Russian protectorate were called the peaceful establishment of a new independent State in Europe.

<sup>1</sup> M. Ruthnaswamy in *Swarajya*.

## F

# INDIA AND THE WORLD

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## I

### THE PANCA ŚĪLA APPROACH

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU<sup>1</sup>

*(Lal Bahadur Shastri, who succeeded Nehru as Prime Minister, continued to follow Nehru's policy of non-alignment based on Panca Śīla. In a speech in the Rajya Sabha on November 23, 1965, he defended this policy on two grounds: (1) Membership in military pacts confers no advantages as was proved by Pakistan's experience in its conflict with India; (2) Developing countries in Asia and Africa which have a vital stake in the maintenance of international peace can help to bring it about only if they pursue an independent foreign policy. The succession in January 1966 of Indira Gandhi, Nehru's daughter, as Prime Minister guaranteed the continuance of the policy of non-alignment and peaceful co-existence. In a broadcast on January 26, 1966, she said: 'The principles which have guided our foreign policy are in keeping with the best traditions of our country and are wholly consistent with our national interest, honour and dignity. They continue to be valid'. For a detailed discussion of this subject, see K. Satchidananda Murty, Indian Foreign Policy, Scientific Book Agency, Calcutta, 1964.—Editor.)*

This approach of *Panca Śīla*,<sup>2</sup> co-existence, peace, tolerance, the attitude to live and let live, has been fundamental to Indian thought throughout the ages and you find it in all religions. Great emperors like Aśoka practised it and Gandhiji organized it into a practical philosophy of action which we have in-

<sup>1</sup> Jawaharlal Nehru's statements in *The Mind of Mr Nehru* edited by R. K. Karanjia, pp. 23-4, 80, 77, 81-2, 86-90.

<sup>2</sup> *Panca Śīla*, a policy for international relations based upon (1) mutual respect for territorial integrity, (2) non-aggression (3) non-interference in each other's internal affairs, (4) equality and mutual benefit, and (5) peaceful coexistence. These principles were first formulated in 1954 in a joint statement of the Prime Ministers of India and China.



herited. There was no place for the 'cold war' in Aśoka's mind, and Gandhiji gave the world the most practical substitute for war and violence by bringing about a mighty revolution with the bloodless weapon of passive resistance. The most important thing about our foreign policy is that it is part of our great historical tradition.—It is a part, if I may say so, of the basic process of Indian thought, the basis of which is to live and let live. I don't say Indians are angels, but anyhow Indian thought is good. So this philosophy of co-existence flows from our history, though it receives powerful support from present day developments when war might mean the total destruction of humankind.

There is one more factor which comes into this picture of class struggles and wars and all that. It is the atom bomb and, of course, its positive aspect in nuclear energy. Now while nuclear energy holds out tremendous hopes for human advancement, the atom bomb threatens to blow up civilization with one or two or three bangs. Thus this emergence of such a destructive weapon makes conflict or war, be it in the form of class struggle or capitalist-socialist conflict, simply so disastrous that it is impossible to think of solutions in terms of violence at all. Hence, from any point of view, the concept of class struggles or wars has been out-dated as too dangerous at a time when not only nations but groups or even individuals can be put in possession of weapons of enormous destructive potentiality. So we have to appreciate and follow the Gandhian solution of synthesis, co-operation, co-existence and progressive equalization.

A good policy does not become bad because it runs into trouble with a restless or aggressive neighbour. It merely puts it to a test, and we are sure it will overcome the challenge.—Obviously we of India or any other country cannot live in a climate of permanent hostility or unfriendliness in terms of history. If one looks at these disputes with Pakistan or China with any kind of perspective, it is but natural that we have to be, and want to be, friends with all neighbouring countries. It has always been our policy—and, mind you, a policy inspired by no momentary whim but dictated by our history and geography and culture—to be friendly with Pakistan and China and develop closer and more co-operative relations with all

neighbouring countries and, indeed, with the whole world for that matter. It is unfortunate that certain conflicts and difficulties have arisen, but it would be very foolish to look forward to a state of permanent hostility with any country. We certainly don't do so. . . . *Panca Śīla* is a good and sound principle and must remain as the only sensible guide to international conduct.

*Solution to World Problems:* I think the approach and philosophy we have inherited from Aśoka, Gandhi and other great thinkers and rulers—the philosophy of live and let live, of non-violence, tolerance and co-existence—provides the only practical solution to the problem of these times.—[This involves] peaceful co-existence and non-interference between states, religions or ideologies. We have the advantage of some historical experience of this strategy which is basically a peaceful, co-operative and constructive strategy and, I may add, particularly suited to times when nuclear weapons have more or less outlawed the other solution of war and the military approach. So we have something like a solution to offer for the troubles, passions and conflicts some powers are involved in. It would be totally unrealistic to suggest that India possesses some magic or *mantra* to end these evils, but it is our responsibility as members of the human family to advocate a course of action which might lessen international tensions and ultimately remove the sources and causes of conflict.—[But] it is not so much a course of action as a new mental approach, not any kind of military or 'cold war' approach, but a peaceful approach, followed by political and economic policies in tune with it.

Even though we may differ from others, it's no use indulging in all the madness of political slogans and ideological condemnations, angry criticisms and all that. We must accept ideas even if we dislike them, provided they do not come in our way. We must realize how absurd it is for half the world to call the other half all black or evil. This sort of thing used to happen in the old days of religious wars. Then the conflicts of naturally exclusive faiths ended and a new spirit of toleration and co-existence developed. Today there is no reason why rival ideological and economic and social theories should not grow up and learn to live and let live. My view is that all this ideological conflict has become outmoded by the technological revolution our world is undergoing: only people locked in the 'cold war'



crisis do not see this fact. So what is really necessary is a change of outlook.—All these problems and crises... can be solved... always keeping two ideas in mind: first, that war must be outlawed and, secondly, all outstanding problems must be peacefully negotiated and settled.

Co-existence is a mental or spiritual attitude which synthesizes differences and contradictions, tries to understand and accommodate different religions, ideologies, political, social and economic systems, and refuses to think in terms of conflict or military solutions. For us in India, a large country with so many different religions, linguistic groups, thoughts, habits, etc., co-existence has become an imperative for our existence as a nation or survival itself. That is perhaps the reason, a historical reason born of our experiences, which compels us to recommend this approach based on tolerance to the international conflicts and tensions.

## 2

## PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE

C. T. CHACKO<sup>1</sup> AND A. APPADORAI<sup>2</sup>

First of all, the question arises as to what exactly is co-existence. At best it appears to lend itself to no precise assessment today. It is therefore too early to insist that the two power blocs mean one and the same thing by this term. There are writers who hold that: 'To the people of the Soviet Union it connotes a more or less temporary balance between the opposing forces of capitalism and communism, which ultimately, according to Marxian doctrine, are bound to come into mortal conflict'.—To the peoples of the non-communist countries the term conveys 'various shades of meaning'.—'To some it represents the only alternative to atomic war; to others it conveys the idea of appeasement or surrender to communist threats. In India it is 'the only alternative to co-destruction'. Thus it would be too naïve to retort that it is a simple plan 'to live and let live'.

<sup>1</sup> C. T. Chacko, 'Peaceful Coexistence as a Doctrine', in *the Indian Year-book of International Affairs*, 1955, pp. 35, 37, 39.■41.

<sup>2</sup> A. Appadorai, *The Use of Force in International Relations*, pp. 70, 75, 78-80, 82, 105-6.

Such an answer is too general to merit any examination, especially in the realm of international affairs.—Secondly the principle of co-existence would seem to imply the recognition of the *status quo*<sup>1</sup>. If such is the case, the principle may not be easy of acceptance, much less of application.

As against all these difficult if not altogether insoluble questions, there stands the most uncompromising, unrelenting sombre alternative, *war*. Leaders of every country, irrespective of its political affiliations to or aloofness from the two power blocs of today, admit that another war would be 'race suicide—'.

One answer to the above questions so far accepted, in some cases half-heartedly of course, is the doctrine of peaceful co-existence. But a condition of peaceful co-existence cannot equate itself with national experience in an international context unless four of the Five Principles (*Panca Śīla*)—are put into full operation. The observance of the first four principles will result in the evolution of the fifth, peaceful co-existence. These principles—appear to have already sufficient application in several international instruments accepted by nations.<sup>2</sup>

Undoubtedly the principles of the *Panca Śīla* appear to provide the path to the realization of peaceful co-existence. But the actual practice of these principles would demand perhaps a long period of time and indeed a considerable measure of change in the network of international relations. The primary danger to the principle of co-existence stems from the fact that the opposite camps tend to attribute to it different meanings. But the truth remains that if it has not one practical meaning to all concerned, it will become meaningless for the purpose of achieving the aims for which it was conceived. (C. T. Chacko)

One thought must, again and again occur to those engaged at the present time in discussing peaceful change, international efforts at the economic development of underdeveloped countries, and tolerance and goodwill: Is all this possible in the prevailing atmosphere of a cold war?—Clearly, co-existence is

<sup>1</sup> Chacko refers to the existing division of Germany, Nato and Warsaw military alliances, colonial régimes and Soviet 'satellites' behind the Iron Curtain, etc.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> Chacko goes on to show that the UN Charter and treaties of trade and commerce among nations enshrine these principles.—Ed.



indicated. Co-existence in the sense of active peaceful co-operation between the communist and non-communist states, implying as it does the permitting of free movement of ideas and persons and of trade, must be promoted in place of the cold war still prevailing.

Our conclusions<sup>1</sup> may be stated thus: (i) Active peaceful co-existence is not only desirable but inevitable if, in the oft-repeated phrase, co-destruction is to be avoided. (ii) Active peaceful co-existence can be promoted only if (a) the idea of inevitability of attaining communism by violent means is given up; (b) the unjustifiability of war in the nuclear age is accepted by the leading nations; (c) the free movement of ideas and persons is encouraged; and (d) the social and economic foundations of democracy in non-communist states are improved.

The acceptance of the possibility of social change by peaceful, parliamentary means, by means other than violence [was] accepted by Marx in 1872, and in 1956 by the Communist Party Congress.—By itself, this may not be very significant; but taken together with the answer to another question raised by the Central Committee of the Communist Party, viz: Is war inevitable?—the answer given was 'war is not a fatal inevitability'—it seems to the present writer important in the context of co-existence.—What is necessary is to create the psychological climate so that either side may have some confidence in the *bona fides* of the other and may contribute to co-existence.

[But] it seems still essential to admit that the possibility of war cannot altogether be ruled out; peaceful change is a necessarily long term process and at any point of time unlikely to satisfy all states which have grievances, fancied or real; pacific means of settlement may be tried and may fail and any state may, as Britain did over the Suez, resort to war, defying international law. It is, clearly, necessary to provide for the principle of collective security because the right of self-defence cannot be denied and the right of self-defence of the smaller nations at any rate can possibly be defended only with the united strength of all.—The collective use of force to be applied—in the last resort—has to be vested in the United

<sup>1</sup> Earlier, Appadorai discusses the Western and Soviet views regarding co-existence.—Ed.

Nations Security Council.—[This] will not include the use of nuclear weapons, the use of which by nations and by the United Nations should be banned, though the Security Council will have at its disposal other weapons. (A. Appadorai)

## 3

## A NEW CIVILIZATION THROUGH THE THIRD CAMP

RAMMANOHAR LOHIA<sup>1</sup>

The extension of Anglo-American influence to all parts of the earth will make the American system 'almighty on this planet' and will not allow the socialist parties to develop and eventually challenge the supremacy of capitalism. On the other hand, incorporation of the world in the Soviet sphere will put the Kremlin-controlled communist parties in power everywhere and destroy the democratic and socialist forces. From this analysis it will be clear that victory of neither of the power blocs will lead to the emancipation of mankind. And therefore, no choice or preference is indicated.

The great quality of the Atlantic bloc, from a socialist point of view, appears to lie in the possibilities of democratic and peaceful change that it offers. Equally, the Soviet bloc appears to have the eminent merit of equalizing standards of living within a nation and all the world over, and thus offering ultimate security against poverty and war.—[But] both systems are like cobras poised to strike, and there is no bridge of ideas between the two. I am not thinking so much of an understanding or even their willingness to talk to each other but of the grievous and total subservience of thinking to force. Ideals have lost their capacity to convert, for they have lost their open character. The two colossuses stand to rigid attention, and nothing but force or the threat of force can convert masses of men. The coercion explicit in Soviet thinking and the convention implicit in Atlantic thinking lead to an identical result—the closing of the human mind. A lot too much is made of this distinction between the medium of convention, but the

<sup>1</sup> Rammanohar Lohia, *Marx, Gandhi and Socialism*, pp. 242-6, 251-3, 257.



consequence is an identical surrender of reason except as propaganda.

The mind of modern civilization came to the end of its voyage some decades ago. The present century has known only one originator, Mahatma Gandhi, and only one discovery, the atomic bomb; the discovery is the culmination of modern civilization the same as the originator came out of a womb not yet identifiable or strong. Modern civilization has placed the idea entirely in the service of force and it cannot be otherwise as long as its three drives are not subjected to a relentless examination. The accusations against each other of capitalism and communism, of the US, and the USSR mount, but they are unable to slay the twin demons of poverty and war, and what they say or do only serves to heighten their demoniac quality. They have enveloped the world with fear and hate. Man is no longer at peace with himself. He must move away from existing civilization in both its aspects of capitalism and communism. Their kindred qualities and drives have made them both equally irrelevant to the venture into a new civilization. This theory of equal irrelevance must not be confused with the doctrine of equal evil or the contemptuous wishing of a plague on both houses. This theory does not set itself upon a high moral pedestal from which to judge and denounce; it is perfectly aware of the imperishable glory of the existing civilization and its achievement of social equality which was never before reached by any earlier civilization. There is much to learn from the thought and practices of the existing civilization, and many of its features will inevitably go with due integrations into the new human effort.

Adherents of the Atlantic as well as the Soviet camp are deeply hurt by the theory of equal irrelevance. They are correct in diagnosing the virus of the opponent but are singularly blind to their own. Concealment of such viruses denotes grave peril to mankind. There is no need to keep quiet over the suppressions and tyrannies of communism, the disaster of its economic aims when applied to the underdeveloped areas, and the barren cruelty that it represents. There is equally no need to keep quiet over the Atlantic effort to act as world's policemen and instructors on behalf of decay, the girdle of firm dealing and reform they are trying to throw around all the world, and their

mad culmination of modern civilization. Nevertheless, it is said that possibilities of change in a democracy make it preferable in any event to a dictatorship. These possibilities are theoretical. Even property relations are exceedingly difficult to change, but a civilization has never yet been known to fly out of its skin to change its specific drives and purposes. A living civilization prospers or is relegated; it does not change. Should this rare display of human intelligence ever occur, those who achieve it will recognize that theory of equal irrelevance was correct until then.

The theory of equal irrelevance began, although it was not so named then, sometime around 1938 or 1939, when all men of ordinary intelligence had come to know that war between the Axis and the Allies was inevitable. At that time, the Indian situation had two perilous elements. Arguing on the basis that the enemy of the foe is a friend, some persons not only felt vaguely pleased at British defeat but they also tried to propound some kind of a pro-Axis policy. There were yet others who had swallowed wholesale the democratic or communist propaganda of the Allies and were frank advocates of a pro-Allies policy and doctrine in the interest of what they thought was human civilization. To ward off either peril, the theory of Third Camp as distinct from that of the Axis and the Allies, and holding them both equally irrelevant, was evolved... This theory was not merely a world rationalization of national requirements. It was more than that. It was also an awakening to the needs of the human race and a declaration that the then existing theories and power systems were unable to fulfil these needs. The national movement, and in particular its expression in the open rebellion of 1942, did in some measure accept this theory, but ideological statements in its support will rarely be found. The ideological statements tended to lean in either direction of peril except those made by the socialists or by Gandhiji, as distinct from the Congress Party's executives and committees.

The Axis and the Allies are gone, and they have been replaced by the Soviets and the Atlantics. Otherwise, everything else has stayed the same. The basic character of the world that was so obvious before the last world war has continued unaffected in the present period, and there is no reason to imagine



that it will change. Accusation and defence, fear, absence of understanding, gross inequality within the nation, and grosser inequality among the nations, unceasing preparation for war whether in offence or defence and, above all, the false promise of a golden age are not one whit less than what they were before the war. If anything, they have increased. In a situation such as this, all argument about which is the lesser evil, the Atlantics or the Soviets, becomes a matter of detail. To the actual contestants, these questions of detail naturally appear as principles of supreme value. The greatest tragedy of mankind is that it is subject not alone to the strength of the great powers, but that it becomes a willing victim of one or the other set of their ideas. These ideas are raucously proclaimed, and mankind repeats them.

A totally new system of thought has to emerge. Its ingredients have increasingly become known to us in the past few years: a decent standard of living for all humanity in place of an increasing standard of living within national frontiers, a universal human vote for a world parliament, the creation of a mental attitude through which men may become rebels in part or in whole to their own governments, in service, not of an existing system of power, that would be spying or treason, but in service of an indiscriminating one world of equality, emergence of political parties that will make use of civil disobedience as much as of reason for realization of their national and international aims.

The mind that accepts the theory of equal irrelevance of Western democracy and communism to the new civilization will naturally be possessed of a great equanimity, but the body that it controls should ever be active. There is so much to do. The Atlantics and the Soviets are so overwhelmingly powerful that those who reject both of them cannot dare to have a moment of sloth or inactivity. We must always be moving and active. Some act has always to be done.

The Socialist Party is committed to the principle of equal irrelevance of capitalism and communism in respect of the creation of a new human civilization. It wishes to build a Third Camp that keeps away from the Atlantic and the Soviet Systems and does not prefer one to the other, holding the two equally good and equally evil, and strives to create a civilization

of free men in an equal world. Such a world can be built alone on the basis of the doctrine that all men are equal not only within the nation but also among nations.

## 4

## THE FUTURE URGE: UNITY OF MAN

RABINDRANATH TAGORE<sup>1</sup>

India has never had a real sense of nationalism. Even though from childhood I had been taught that the idolatry of nation is almost better than reverence for God and humanity, I believe I have outgrown that teaching, and it is my conviction that my countrymen will gain truly their India by fighting against that education which teaches them that a country is greater than the ideals of humanity.

I am not against one nation in particular, but against the general idea of all nations. What is the nation? It is the aspect of a whole people as an organized power. This organization incessantly keeps up the insistence of the population on becoming strong and efficient. But this strenuous effort after strength and efficiency drains man's energy from his higher nature where he is self-sacrificing and creative. For thereby man's power of sacrifice is diverted from his ultimate object, which is moral, to the maintenance of this organization, which is mechanical.

Nationalism is a great menace. It is the particular thing which for years has been at the bottom of India's troubles. And inasmuch as we have been ruled and dominated by a nation that is strictly political in its attitude, we have tried to develop within ourselves, despite our inheritance from the past, a belief in our eventual political destiny.

We must never forget in the present day that those people who have got their political freedom are not necessarily free,

<sup>1</sup> Rabindranath Tagore, selections from D. M. Brown (ed.), *The White Umbrella*, pp. 113-14, 120-1; and K. P. Karunakaran (ed.), *Modern Indian Political Tradition*, pp. 347, 350-1, 357, 359-61. The first four paragraphs are from Tagore's *Nationalism*, and the last three from his article 'The Call of Truth' in *Modern Review*, October 1921.



they are merely powerful. The passions which are unbridled in them are creating huge organizations of slavery in the disguise of freedom. . . . In the so-called free countries the majority of the people are not free; they are driven by the minority to a goal which is not even known to them. This becomes possible only because people do not acknowledge moral and spiritual freedom as their object. They create huge eddies with their passions, and they feel dizzily inebriated with the mere velocity of their whirling movement, taking that to be freedom. But the doom which is waiting to overtake them is as certain as death—for man's truth is moral truth, and his emancipation is in the spiritual life.

A man's homeland has to be a projection as well as mirror of his inmost life.—We must win over our country, not from some foreigner but from our own inertia, our indifference.—Yājñavalkya has said: 'The son is dear to us not just because we desire a son but because we seek to realize in him our own self.' This applies also to our homeland; it has to be dear to us, since it is the expression of our own self. When we get that awareness, we shall no longer have to wait on the pleasure of others for our country's constructive progress.—What we need above all else is self-preparation, a striving to develop the inner man, so that the groundwork for a common endeavour may be ready. This has to be achieved not by blind obedience to an external bidding but by disciplined reason. Whatever fails to illumine the mind and keeps the mind in a state of daze, is a deterrent. . . . To make the country our own by means of our creative power is indeed a great call.—Man's greatest strength is within him and it is up to him to draw on that strength and not on blind discipline.

[Swarāj:] Its real place is within us—the mind with its diverse power goes on building Swarāj for itself. Nowhere in the world has this work been completed; in some part of the body-politic a lingering greed or delusion keeps up the bondage. And that bondage is always within the mind itself.—As everywhere else, Swarāj in this country has to find its basis in the mind's unfoldment, in knowledge, in scientific thinking, and not in shallow gestures. . . . As dogma takes the place of reason, freedom will give way to some kind of despotism. . . . That is just why I am so anxious to reinstate reason on its lost pedestal.

India's awakening is a part of the awakening of the world. With the Great War the door of a new age has flung open.—Henceforth, any nation which seeks isolation for itself must come into conflict with the time-spirit and find no peace. From now onward the plane of thinking of every nation will have to be international. It is the striving of the new age to develop in the mind this faculty of universality.—The urge of the future age, which we feel even today, is towards the unity of man.—At this dawn of the world's awakening, if our own national endeavour holds no intimations of a universal message, the poverty of our spirit will be laid piteously bare.



## PART III

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# PHILOSOPHY

'Philosophy as the rational critique of sciences discriminates between good and bad in religion, gain and loss in economics and policy or impolicy in politics. Thus it benefits people by giving them mental poise in prosperity and adversity, and making them expert in understanding, speech and action.'

—Kautilya, *Arthaśāstra*, I. 2.





# A

## PHILOSOPHY IN INDIA

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### I

#### AN IDEALIST'S VIEW OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

S. RADHAKRISHNAN<sup>1</sup>

Philosophy in India is essentially spiritual. The history of Indian thought illustrates the endless quest of the mind, ever old, ever new.—The spiritual motive dominates life in India. Indian philosophy has its interest in the haunts of men, and not in supra-lunar solitudes. It takes its origin in life, and enters back into life after passing through the schools. The great works of Indian philosophy do not have that *ex cathedra* character which is so prominent a feature of the latter criticisms and commentaries. The Gītā and the Upaniṣads are not remote from popular belief. They are the great literature of the country, and at the same time vehicles of the great systems of thought. The Purāṇas contain the truth dressed up in myths and stories, to suit the weak understanding of the majority. The hard task of interesting the multitude in metaphysics is achieved in India.—The founders of philosophy strive for a socio-spiritual reformation of the country. When the Indian civilization is called a Brāhmanical one, it only means that its main character and dominating motives are shaped by its philosophical thinkers and religious minds, though these are not all of Brāhmana birth. The idea of Plato that philosophers must be the rulers and directors of society is practised in India. The ultimate truths are truths of spirit, and in the light of them actual life has to be refined.—Religion in India is not dogmatic. It is a rational synthesis which goes on gathering into itself new conceptions as philosophy progresses. It is experimental and provisional in its nature, attempting to keep pace with the

<sup>1</sup> S. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, pp. 24-9, 31-2, 40.

progress of thought.—It is the intimate relation between the truth of philosophy and the daily life of people that makes religion always alive and real.

The problems of religion stimulate the philosophic spirit. The Indian mind has been traditionally exercised over the questions of the nature of Godhead, the end of life and the relation of the individual to the universal soul. Though philosophy in India has not as a rule completely freed itself from the fascinations of religious speculation, yet the philosophical discussions have not been hampered by religious forms. The two were not confused. On account of the close connection between theory and practice, doctrine and life, a philosophy which could not stand the test of life, not in the pragmatistic but the larger sense of the term, had no chance of survival. To those who realize the true kinship between life and theory, philosophy becomes a way of life, an approach to spiritual realization.

It is untrue to say that philosophy in India never became self-conscious or critical. Even in its early stages rational reflection tended to correct religious belief. Witness the advance of religion implied in the progress from the hymns of the Veda to the Upaniṣads. When we come to Buddhism, the philosophic spirit has already become that confident attitude of mind which in intellectual matters bends to no outside authority and recognizes no limit to its enterprise, unless it be as the result of logic, which probes all things, tests all things, and follows fearlessly wherever the argument leads. When we reach the several darśanas or systems of thought, we have mighty and persistent efforts at systematic thinking. How completely free from traditional religion and bias the systems are will be obvious from the fact that the Sāṅkhya is silent about the existence of God, though certain about its theoretical indemonstrability. Vaiśeṣika and Yoga, while they admit a supreme being, do not consider him to be the creator of the universe, and Jaimini refers to God only to deny his providence and moral government of the world. The early Buddhist systems are known to be indifferent to God, and we have also the materialist Cārvākas, who deny God, ridicule the priests, revile the Vedas and seek salvation in pleasure.

The supremacy of religion and of social tradition in life does not hamper the free pursuit of philosophy. It is a strange para-



dox, and yet nothing more than the obvious truth that while the social life of an individual is bound by the rigours of caste, he is free to roam in the matter of opinion. Reason freely questions and criticizes the creeds in which men are born. That is why the heretic, the sceptic, the unbeliever, the rationalist and the freethinker, the materialist and the hedonist all flourish in the soil of India. The *Mahābhārata* says: 'There is no muni who has not an opinion of his own'.—All this is evidence of the strong intellectuality of the Indian mind which seeks to know the inner truth and the law of all sides of human activity.

The philosophic attempt to determine the nature of reality may start either with the thinking self or the objects of thought. In India the interest of philosophy is in the self of man. Where the vision is turned outward, the rush of fleeting events engages the mind. In India 'Ātmānam viddhi', know the self, sums up the law and the prophets. . . . Indian psychology realized the value of concentration and looked upon it as the means for the perception of the truth. It believed that there were no ranges of life or mind which could not be reached by a methodical training of will and knowledge. It recognized the close connection of mind and body.

Indian thought takes into account the modes of waking, dreaming and dreamless sleep. If we look upon the waking consciousness as the whole, then we get realistic, dualistic and pluralistic conceptions of metaphysics. Dream consciousness when exclusively studied leads us to subjectivist doctrines. The state of dreamless sleep inclines us to abstract and mystical theories. The whole truth must take all the modes of consciousness into account.

Indian thought attempts vast, impersonal views of existence, and makes it easy for the critic to bring the charge of being more idealistic and contemplative, producing dreamy visionaries and strangers in the world, while Western thought is more particularist and pragmatistic. The latter depends on what we call the senses, the former presses the soul sense into the service of speculation.—It is the synthetic vision of India that has made philosophy comprehend several sciences which have become differentiated in modern times. . . . In ancient Indian scriptures we possess the full content of the philosophic sphere.

If we put the subjective interest of the Indian mind along with its tendency to arrive at a synthetic vision, we shall see how monistic idealism becomes the truth of things. To it the whole growth of Vedjic thought points; on it are based the Buddhistic and the Brāhmanical religions; it is the highest truth revealed to India. Even systems which announce themselves as dualistic or pluralistic seem to be permeated by a strong monistic character. If we can abstract from the variety of opinion and observe the general spirit of Indian thought, we shall find that it has a disposition to interpret life and nature in the way of monistic idealism, though this tendency is so plastic, living and manifold that it takes many forms and expresses itself in even mutually hostile teachings.

## 2

AN EXPERIENTIALIST'S VIEW OF  
INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

SURENDRANATH DASGUPTA

Indian Philosophy is like a tropical forest, where almost all types of thought, that have been current in the West since the days of the Greeks, can be found. The writings of the commentators through successive generations abound in logical precision of thought and true philosophical acumen, which are almost unparalleled. The note of ethical purity, religious contentment and inwardness of mind, with which Indian philosophy rings, and the practical harmony between life and philosophy that forms the central theme of almost all systems of Indian philosophy, mark them out from systems of European philosophy, where philosophy is looked upon more as a theoretic science than as a science of practice. The chief concern of the philosophers of India in the past was not to conceive a philosophical scheme like a toy-machine to play with, but to make it a real chariot on which they could ride. But life here on the earth was sorrowful and was only a life of probation. The real life consisted in the ushering in of a life of emancipation, which would absolutely extinguish this life. Philosophy should be



brought into practice for conducting this life to that end. Philosophy was never blended in harmony with the present life as we experience it without subordinating the latter to some other higher forms of existence. In this view, philosophy was the guide for the attainment of a permanent state of being from which there is no fall, no change.<sup>1</sup>

It is, however, remarkable that with the exception of the Cārvāka materialists all the other systems agree on some fundamental points of importance. The systems of philosophy in India were not stirred up merely by the speculative demands of the human mind which has a natural inclination for indulging in abstract thought, but by deep craving after the realization of the religious purpose of life. It is surprising to note that the postulates, aims and conditions for such a realization were found to be identical in all the conflicting systems. Whatever may be their differences of opinion in other matters, so far as the general postulates for the realization, of the transcendent state, the *summum bonum* of life, were concerned, all the systems were practically in thorough agreement. It may be worth while to note some of them at this stage.

First, the theory of karma and rebirth. All the Indian systems agree in believing that whatever action is done by an individual leaves behind it some sort of potency which has the power to ordain for him joy or sorrow in the future according as it is good or bad. When the fruits of the actions are such that they cannot be enjoyed in the present life or in a human life, the individual has to take another birth as a man or any other being in order to suffer them.—The Indian systems agree . . . in believing that this beginningless chain of karma and its fruits, of births and rebirths, this running on from beginningless time has somewhere its end. This end was not to be attained at some distant time or in some distant kingdom, but was to be sought within us. Karma leads us to this endless cycle, and if we could divest ourselves of all such emotions, ideas or desires as lead us to action, we should find within us the actionless self which neither suffers nor enjoys, neither works nor undergoes rebirth.

The Buddhists did not admit the existence of soul, but

<sup>1</sup> Dasgupta, in *Contemporary Indian Philosophy* (ed. Radhakrishnan and Muirhead), pp. 252-3.

recognized that the final realization of the process of karma is to be found in the ultimate dissolution called Nirvāṇa.—All the Indian systems except Buddhism admit the existence of a permanent entity variously called ātman, puruṣa or jīva. As to the exact nature of this soul there are indeed divergences of view. Thus while the Nyāya calls it absolutely qualityless and characterless, indeterminate unconscious entity, Sāṅkhya describes it as being of the nature of pure consciousness, the Vedānta says that it is that fundamental point of unity implied in pure consciousness (*cit*), pure bliss (*ānanda*) and pure being (*sat*). But all agree in holding that it is pure and unsullied in its nature and that all impurities of action or passion do not form a real part of it. The *summum bonum* of life is attained when all impurities are removed and the pure nature of the self is thoroughly and permanently apprehended and all other extraneous connections with it are absolutely dissociated.

Though the belief that the world is full of sorrow has not been equally prominently emphasized in all systems, yet it may be considered as being shared by all of them. . . . All our experiences are essentially sorrowful and ultimately sorrow-begetting. Sorrow is the ultimate truth of this process of the world. . . . The only way to get rid of it is by the culmination of moral greatness and true knowledge which uproot sorrow once for all. It is our ignorance that the self is intimately connected with the experiences of life or its pleasures, that leads us to action and arouses passion in us for the enjoyment of pleasures and other emotions and activities. Through the highest moral elevation a man may attain absolute dispassion towards world experiences and retire in body, mind, and speech from all worldly concerns. When the mind is so purified, the self shines in its true light, and its true nature is rightly conceived. When this is once done the self can never again be associated with passion or ignorance. It becomes at this stage ultimately dissociated from *citta* which contains within it the root of all emotions, ideas, and actions. Thus emancipated the self for ever conquers all sorrow. It is important, however, to note in this connection that emancipation is not based on a general aversion to intercourse with the world or on such feelings as a disappointed person may have, but on the appreciation of the state of mukti as the supremely blessed one. . . . There was never



the slightest tendency to shirk the duties of this life, but to rise above them through right performance and right understanding. It is only when a man rises to the highest pinnacle of moral glory that he is fit for aspiring to that realization of selfhood in comparison with which all worldly things or even the joys of Heaven would not only shrink into insignificance, but appear in their true character as sorrowful and loathsome. . . . The sorrow around us has no fear for us if we remember that we are naturally sorrowless and blessed in ourselves. The pessimistic view loses all terror as it closes in absolute optimistic confidence in one's own self and the ultimate destiny and goal of emancipation.

As might be expected the Indian systems are all agreed upon the general principles of ethical conduct which must be followed for the attainment of salvation. That all passions are to be controlled, no injury to life in any form should be done, and that all desire for pleasures should be checked, are principles which are almost universally acknowledged. When a man attains a very high degree of moral greatness he has to strengthen and prepare his mind for further purifying and steadying it for the attainment of his ideal. . . . The means to be adopted for purification are almost everywhere essentially the same as those advocated by the Yoga system. . . . The religious craving has been universal in India and this uniformity of *sādhana* has therefore secured for India a unity in all her aspirations and strivings.<sup>1</sup>

Indian philosophy, in spite of its magnificent outlook, thoroughness of logical dialectic, its high appreciation of moral and religious values, is closed all round by four walls of unproved dogmas: (1) the dogma of the infallibility of the Vedic wisdom, (2) the dogma of emancipation and bondage, (3) the dogma of the law of karma, (4) the dogma of rebirth. Of these, the first is the primary dogma which is associated with the corollary that reason is unable to discover the truth—a creed which is almost suicidal to any philosophy in the modern sense of the term. According to this view, reason is only useful for biological or sociological purposes, but is impotent to give us any glimpse of the nature of truth. Reason must always be a hand-

<sup>1</sup> Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, pp. 71, 74-7.

maid to scriptural testimony and must always, therefore be, used for discovering the import of such testimony and for persuading us to believe it. A student of Indian philosophy knows well how reason entered into the Vedic circle like the camel in the fable and ultimately practically dislodged the Vedic dogma professing only a lip-loyalty to it. Different interpreters of the Upaniṣads have always treated the Vedic texts like noses of wax and twisted them differently to suit the convenience of each specific type of reasoning. If reason is the interpreter, the infallibility of the Vedic wisdom becomes only nominal.

An ineffable super-conscious state is often described in the Upaniṣads, and in some passages there is a tendency to regard it as an unchangeable condition or state from which there is no fall. This has often been interpreted as the doctrine of emancipation.—Relying on the unrelational ineffable state as the ultimate reality, the relationing factor implied in it is regarded as false. Others, however, such as the followers of the Sāṅkhya, while admitting the existence of the unconditioned as the ineffable super-consciousness (the *puruṣas*), could not restrict the concept of reality to it alone, and were obliged to admit another order of reality as an indefinite complex (the *prakṛti*).—The assumption of the unconditioned either as the only reality or as a parallel reality made it difficult either to explain change or the return from the change to the changelessness. Had it not been for the dogma of emancipation, the systems would not have been fettered in this way, and a more rational explanation might have been effected.

On the moral side, the assumption of the unconditioned as emancipation led to the view that all our experiential states are states of bondage. Bondage, thus considered, has to be regarded as the natural tendency of some mental states to flow towards other mental states (which in the moral terminology is called '*tṛṣṇā*', or desire), and the actual flow of it and its resultants are called *Karma*. But as the hypothetical emancipation is never experienced by any one of us and as its reality cannot be denied on account of the scriptural testimony, the only way left was its indefinite postponement. Such a postponement necessitated the postulation of a practically endless series of succeeding lives, through which the relational mental



structure persisted.—The principal lesson I derived from my study of Indian philosophy is that extraneous assumptions of any kind, which do not directly explain experience, . . . are bound to hamper the progress of philosophical speculations and blur the philosophical outlook. Philosophy, if it is to grow, has to be founded on experience.<sup>1</sup>

## 3

A NATURALISTIC HUMANIST'S  
VIEW OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHYM. N. ROY<sup>2</sup>

To have found the unity in diversity, is claimed as the greatest merit of orthodox Hindu philosophy. But, as a matter of fact, the unity was not found. It was simply assumed or imagined. It is an ideal conception which brushes aside the problems to be solved. Since the rise of the material world out of the assumed immaterial root-cause is not logically possible, dualism persists, defying all metaphysical verbal jugglery. From the Aupaniṣadic Ṛṣis down to Śaṅkarācārya, no orthodox Hindu speculative thinker was able to prove how the diversities of nature could arise from a common cause. The sheer impossibility of the task ultimately drove Indian speculation to the monumental absurdity of the Māyāvāda.

Like ancient Greece, India also had known naturalist, secular and rationalist currents of philosophical thought. . . . More than two thousand years ago the founder of the Sāṅkhya system of philosophy, Kapila, denied the existence of God because there was no evidence. And Kapila's agnostic naturalism was preceded by the materialist (atomist) rationalism of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika system expounded by Kaṇāda and Gautama.

Dissatisfaction with the Vedic natural religion gave rise to the speculation about the origin of the world. The Upaniṣads

<sup>1</sup> in *Contemporary Indian Philosophy* (ed. Radhakrishnan and Muirhead), pp. 254-5, 257, 262.

<sup>2</sup> M. N. Roy, Introduction to K. Satchidananda Murty, *Evolution of Philosophy in India*. Paragraphs rearranged.

contain fragmentary records of the early spirit of enquiry. Indeed, out and out atheism and materialism can be found in some of them. Naturalist heretical thought seems to have developed even earlier in the Vedic age. There are hymns which invoke the wrath of the gods against unbelievers. The Svabhāvavādins (naturalists), mentioned in the earlier Upaniṣads and the Vedas, must have been the pioneers of Indian philosophy. They not only disputed the existence of gods and scoffed at the pretensions of the priests, but were empiricists holding that perception was the only source of knowledge. Therefore, they were called 'Dārśanikas.'

For more than a thousand years, until the fall of Buddhism, Indian philosophical thought was sceptical, naturalist, empirical, materialist.—The long process of the development of naturalist, rationalist, sceptic, agnostic and materialist thought in ancient India found culmination in the Cārvāka system, which can be compared with Greek Epicureanism, and as such is to be appreciated as the positive outcome of the intellectual culture of ancient India.—The Cārvākas were not mere nihilists, agnostics and sceptics. They developed an elaborate system of positive philosophical thought.

Much of the really philosophical thought of ancient India has unfortunately been lost. But from the fragmentary evidence on record, that forgotten chapter of the spiritual history of Indian can be reconstructed. As everywhere, originally, in India also, philosophy was materialism. The materialistic outcome of the speculations of the rebels against the Vedic natural religion, contained in the three systems of philosophy proper, namely, Vaiśeṣika, Sāṅkhya and Nyāya, provided the inspiration for the greatest event in the history of ancient India—the Buddhist Revolution.—Because it grew out of a background of the subordination of the faith in the supernatural to human reason, Buddhism, though counted as one of the great religions of the world, was not a religion in the strictest sense.

The triumphant Brāhmanical reaction not only falsified ancient philosophical thought, which had dared deny the authority of the Vedas and even the existence of God, so as to combat it conveniently; but the blasphemous works of atheists, materialists and nihilists were mostly destroyed [by it]. India entered her Middle Ages, during which theology, scholastic as



well as anthropomorphic, dominated thought. What has come down as orthodox Hindu philosophy was elaborated in that period of intellectual reaction. Being primarily concerned with the nature of God, which conception was taken for granted, of the soul and how the latter could return to its transcendental home, it was not philosophy but theology.

Śankarācārya constructed his rigidly logical, but philosophically ambiguous, system of monism for combating Buddhist Idealism. But the real enemy he had to contend with was the materialist traditions of the pre-Buddhist philosophy. Śankarācārya was the ideologist of the Brāhmanical reaction and patriarchal society which were re-established on the ruins of the Buddhist Revolution. But his effort for liquidating the traditions of the really philosophical thought of ancient India was a failure. It is obvious from a critical study of Śankarācārya's work that he failed to meet the materialists on their ground. He could not refute their arguments.

By her own effort, India never emerged from the intellectual twilight of her Middle Ages which followed the downfall of Buddhism. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, individual religious reformers preached devotionism which would dispense with the priestly intermediary between God and his devotees. But their influence was local and transitory. India experienced neither a Renaissance nor a Reformation. The intellectual stagnation lasted until the middle of the nineteenth century, when a faint echo of the modern rationalist and liberal thought reached India to disturb it partially. During the latter half of the century, the intellectual life of the country was influenced by a number of men who preached revolt against religious orthodoxy, intellectual parochialism and social injustice. There was no great philosopher amongst them. They were social reformers. None of them thought of going behind the twilight of the Middle Ages in search of India's philosophical heritage. The attitude of the more advanced amongst those forerunners of an Indian Renaissance towards her past was negative. They drew inspiration from the West and held that India as a whole must do the same in order to emerge from medievalism.

A movement of religious reform and of revival of the spiritual philosophy of India were the reaction to that process of the

disintegration of an intellectually stagnant society. Return to the pristine purity of Vedic ritualism was the religious reform advocated. The orthodoxy of the reformers was more bigoted than the current variety. Such a reactionary movement being incapable of meeting the situation, it was reinforced by the modern prophets of India's spiritual mission, who sought to provide a philosophical sanction for a religious revivalism. It was discovered in the post-Buddhist scholastic theology, which had expounded Vedānta as the quintessence of the philosophical thought of ancient India.



## B

# NATURALISM AND BUDDHISM

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### I

## VEDIC-CĀRVĀKA NATURALISM: AUTHENTIC INDIAN THOUGHT

C. KUNHAN RAJA<sup>1</sup>

The Cārvāka is one of the many systems of thought that prevailed in India. The system has many theories in common with dialectical materialism of the present age. Although we find that the system was denounced, there was no persecution of the followers of the system in India by the orthodox people whose views are mercilessly criticized in the system. Their doctrines were admitted for discussion in the assemblies of scholars and thinkers, and they were permitted to put forward their views with as much freedom as the follower of any other system of thought. Thus, in most of the texts on orthodox systems it is found that there is a discussion of the theories propounded by the Cārvākas along with the theories propounded by the Buddhist schools of thought. If the system failed and disappeared, it is only on the intellectual plane and there has been no political power used for the suppression of the system. If fire, sword, dungeons and other weapons of torture had been employed for the suppression of this system of thought, there would have been no space allotted for the discussion of the theories of the system in texts relating to the orthodox currents of thought.

The difficulty in dealing with this system of thought, which at some time must have been assigned a very honoured place in the intellectual life of the nation, is that we do not know what the system is. There is no text dealing with it.—What we have is only what is presented by the opponents for refutation.

<sup>1</sup> C. Kunhan Raja, 'The Carvaka System' in *The Philosophical Quarterly*.  
Selections made *passim*.

Such presentations are caricatures and not objective presentations of the facts for discussion.

The two cardinal points in the doctrines of the Cārvāka system are that there is no soul or spirit distinct from matter, and further that there is nothing which does not, or at least which cannot, fall within the sphere of the direct experience of man. Other points like the restriction of reality to four of the five elements recognized in philosophy and the denial of a future existence for the so-called soul after death are the natural outcome of these two cardinal points.

The Cārvākas do not accept a reality called a soul. That does not mean that they made no difference between the movement in a rolling ball and the movement in an organism, say, the body of a human being. They accepted the reality of the mind, which does not exist in a rolling ball, and which exists in a functioning man. What they say is only this that there is nothing called a soul external to matter, which gets into the material body like a cobra getting into the basket of a serpent charmer and which at the time of death gets out of that body like the same cobra getting out of the basket. They do not therefore accept the reality of the soul, which transmigrates from body to body like a monkey hopping from tree to tree in a forest. What is called the soul is, according to them, something within the body and part of the body.

When a ball rolls, there is no reality external to the ball, called the rolling, which gets into the ball and which gets out of the ball. When there is fermentation in milk or in barley flour mixed with water or in the juice extracted from palm trees, there is nothing called a fermentation which gets into the materials from an external source. Everything is in matter, it can never have an existence and a reality independent of matter. We say that a thing is beautiful; but there is no beauty apart from that beautiful thing. Similarly, there is no reality called virtue apart from the virtuous man. There is no thought apart from the thinking brain. Similarly, there is no form independent of matter. But at the same time they are distinct. There is no life outside of the living person which enters the body at birth and leaves it at death.

According to modern dialectic, there had been a stage when there was no mind; in the evolution of the universe, the non-



living preceded the living. I am not sure whether this doctrine found a place in the Cārvāka system. There is no evidence. In Indian thought, there was never a time when there was no life. Every mechanical activity in the world can be traced to an organic function, to a life function. We can wind a clock and the clock works. This is the case with every machine. A thing cannot start on a movement unless there is life behind it. A plant grows from within. It heals from within. This is not the case with a rock. Indian thought does not distinguish between the mechanical function and the organic function. Ultimately they go back to the same basic fundamental. There might have been a stage when there was no life function as we understand it. Still, every movement is a manifestation of that ultimate fundamental basis called the life principle.

In the R̥g-Veda, there are two currents of thought traceable. In one, the ultimate principle is of the nature of what we call matter. Then, the life principle, which is inherent in it, began to function. That is what is meant in the passage where it is said that 'in that stage there was neither what "was" nor what "was not", and that the "one" breathed without inhaling or exhaling, through its own inherent power'. 'But a will began to operate in it', and there was the evolution of the differentiated from the ultimate basic material. Here the nature of that material is what we call matter. Elsewhere, the ultimate fundamental basis is called 'person', which emphasizes the life aspect; and from that, there arose the differentiated universe. But even here, we find that the 'person' is thought of as a material body, with head and legs and other limbs, and with spatial extension. Thus in both places, the material aspect is quite clear. But the life aspect is also there in both. One thing is quite clear: there is no soul, no spirit, no life, outside of the material body, outside of what lives. The Cārvāka thought agrees more with the R̥g-Vedic pattern than with what is found in the later 'systems of philosophy', where the soul, the spirit, is clear of the body. I have not been able to detect one single evidence of the faintest nature in the whole of the R̥g-Veda where there is the indication of a soul or spirit that is disembodied, that is completely detached from matter. Not only men, but gods too have a body and a mind. When people die, they continue their physical function. They

return to the earth to partake of the offerings given them by those left behind, at rituals. The only fundamental difference on this problem between Indian thought, including the Ṛig-Vedic thought and the Cārvāka thought, and modern dialectic, is that in the former a stage without life is not accepted. Otherwise the three agree. But the position is different in the case of later systems of philosophy. In the Upaniṣads also, there is no evidence of the recognition of a soul or spirit distinct from, and independent of, body and matter. It is a later innovation in Indian thought.

This entire matter-life combination is within the direct cognition of man. This is the position of the Cārvākas. That is why they say that there is only *Pratyakṣa* or direct mode of cognition. It is a caricature of their position when it is said that the Cārvākas did not accept inference. It is ridiculous.—Everything that is real must come within the sphere of man's knowledge. This asserts man's ability to know everything. There is nothing which, by its own nature, is not capable of being directly known. It may be that something is not known; that is another matter. It is not because of any special nature in an object that it cannot be known. The cause is something else.

I have studied the whole of the Ṛig-Veda thoroughly and I have not been able to find any indication of a reality which is by its very nature outside the cognition of man through direct experience. My own conclusion is that it is the Cārvākas who continue the thought pattern of the Veda and that it is the later systems of philosophy that have deviated from it. Everything may not have been known. But there is nothing which by its own nature is beyond the sphere of direct experience of man. This is the philosophy of the Veda, and the Cārvākas demand nothing more.

The Vedic philosophy is that what 'Is' is what is good. To say that a thing 'Is' and is at the same time not good is a contradiction. For a thing to be good, there is no other justification than that it 'Is'. It is only at a later stage that the doctrine of a contrast between what is good and what is bad among things that exist came into the thought of the Indian people. Thus there arose a contrast between matter and spirit. Matter is not good, spirit alone is good. A separation between



matter and spirit is the goal for man. Matter is the seat of activity and spirit is immobile. So every kind of activity is an evil. So long as man is a combination of matter and spirit, man cannot know correctly. To experience, under the same condition, is to suffer. This is the thought pattern that crept into the Indian intellect at a later stage which is against the philosophy of the Vedas. If to know is to err, to experience is to suffer and to do is to sin, then the only way in which an individual can be free from this bondage is for the spirit in him to attain to a state of isolation from matter, which is external to his real being. It is this doctrine that we find in the systems of philosophy, [which] have really gone astray from the path of the Veda.

The doctrines of the Cārvāka system are that there is no soul which is detachable from matter, that there is nothing in the world which cannot by its nature be known by man through direct experience. There is no universal inflexible law of causation. There is no rigid uniformity in the world from which there is no deviation possible. In all these points, the Cārvāka system follows the Veda and its doctrines are in conformity with modern thought. This shows that the Vedic culture and modern thought are very close to each other. The world is a good world, man is a good man. If there is suffering, the remedy is available in the world itself. There is no need to escape from this world and to migrate to another world or condition where alone there is real happiness.

The *Arthaśāstra* and the *Kāmasāstra* prescribe what is good for man's life. There is no denial of *Dharma* or the Law. *Dharma* is not what secures a passage to heaven. *Dharma* regulates *Artha* and *Kāma* in the world. The universe is not a chaos, and man's life in the world is not a state of anarchy. There is a law that governs progress in the world and there is also a law that governs the mutual relation of man and man. This is the great philosophy of the Cārvākas, if we reconstruct that philosophy from the scraps available.

The *Arthaśāstra* and the *Kāmasāstra* are remnants of the associates of the original Cārvāka system of philosophy. According to the *Arthaśāstra*, there are only two disciplines for man to be trained in for a full civic life, and they are economics and politics, as taught in the Cārvāka system. The implication

is that these two disciplines help man to enjoy life, and that is the only goal. There are three values: what is good, what is useful and what is enjoyable. A thing is good when it helps the acquisition of what is useful, and a thing is useful when it leads to what is enjoyable. . . . The *Kāmasāstra* also recognizes three values with three separate goals. *Dharma* is to attain heaven. But that is only for some, and there are others to whom *Artha* is most important as in the case of those engaged in the government of the country, and to others *Kāma* is most important as in the case of the ordinary people attached to the pleasures of life.

The Cārvākas do not object to religious rituals. They simply question the basic objective of such rituals. If *Artha* and *Kāma* are given their due importance, the Cārvākas are satisfied. The God denied is the God inferred through syllogistic arguments. And this position is acceptable to the Sāṅkhya and to the Mīmāṃsā systems also among the orthodox systems. As a matter of fact, even the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata* are not opposed to the main tenets of the Cārvākas, in so far as they do not consider the world as a seat of sin and suffering, and also in so far as they do not teach a final separation of the soul from matter, called *Mokṣa*. They teach only the two goals of *Artha* and *Kāma* along with *Dharma*, and this *Dharma* is what regulates the other two and not what procures another goal. The real opposition of the Cārvākas is to the problem that matter and soul are distinct and separable, and that true happiness is not possible in this life on the earth and can be attained only after *Mokṣa*. The Cārvāka system is the Vedic system of thought and is not opposed to the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata*.

## 2

## THE DHAMMA OF UNDERSTANDING AND LOVE

B. R. AMBEDKAR<sup>1</sup>

### *Dhamma and Religion*

What the Buddha calls Dhamma differs fundamentally from what is called Religion.—It is better to proceed to give an idea of Dhamma and show how it differs from Religion. Religion, it is

<sup>1</sup> B. R. Ambedkar *The Buddha and His Dhamma*, pp. 316–18, 320–2; 322–3.



said, is personal and one must keep it to oneself. One must not let it play its part in public life. Contrary to this, Dhamma is social. It is fundamentally and essentially so. Dhamma is righteousness, which means right relations between man and man in all spheres of life. From this it is evident that one man if he is alone does not need Dhamma. But when there are two men living in relation to each other they must find a place for Dhamma whether they like it or not. Neither can escape it. In other words, society cannot do without Dhamma. Society has to choose one of the three alternatives. Society may choose not to have any Dhamma, as an instrument of Government. For Dhamma is nothing if it is not an instrument of Government. This means Society chooses the road to anarchy. Secondly, Society may choose the police, i.e., dictatorship as an instrument of government. Thirdly, society may choose Dhamma plus the magistrate wherever people fail to observe the Dhamma. In anarchy and dictatorship liberty is lost. Only in the third liberty survives. Those who want liberty must therefore have Dhamma. Now what is Dhamma? and why is Dhamma necessary? According to the Buddha, Dhamma consists of *Prajñā* and *Karuṇā*. . . . *Prajñā* is understanding. The Buddha made *Prajñā* one of the two cornerstones of his Dhamma because he did not wish to leave any room for superstition. . . . *Karuṇā* is love. Because without it society can neither live nor grow, that is why the Buddha made it the second corner-stone of his Dhamma. Such is the definition of the Buddha's Dhamma. How different is this definition of the Dhamma from that of Religion. So ancient, yet so modern.—So aboriginal yet so original, [and]—so true. A unique amalgam of *Prajñā* and *Karuṇā* is the Dhamma of the Buddha.—Religion is concerned with revealing the beginning of things and Dhamma is not.—The purpose of Religion is to explain the origin of the world. The purpose of Dhamma is to reconstruct the world.

### *Morality in Religion and Dhamma*

Morality has no place in religion. The content of religion consists of God, soul, prayer, worship, rituals, ceremonies and sacrifices. Morality comes in only wherein man comes in relation to man. Morality comes in into religion as a side wind to maintain peace and order. Religion is a triangular piece. Be

good to your neighbour because you are both children of God. That is the argument of religion. Every religion preaches morality, but morality is not the root of religion. It is a wagon attached to it. It is attached and detached as the occasion requires. The action of morality in the functioning of religion is therefore casual and occasional. Morality in religions is therefore not effective.

What is the place of morality in Dhamma? The simple answer is morality is Dhamma and Dhamma is morality. In other words, in Dhamma morality takes the place of God although there is no God in Dhamma. In Dhamma there is no place for prayers, pilgrimages, rituals, ceremonies or sacrifices. Morality is the essence of Dhamma. Without it there is no Dhamma. Morality in Dhamma arises from the direct necessity for man to love man. It does not require the sanction of God. It is not to please God that man has to be moral. It is for his own good that man has to love man.

### *Morality and the Sacred*

In every human society, primitive or advanced, there are some things or beliefs which it regards as sacred and the rest as profane. When a thing or belief has reached the stage of being sacred (*pavitra*) it means that it cannot be violated. Indeed it cannot be touched. It is taboo. Contrary to this, a thing or a belief which is profane (*apavitra*), i.e. outside the field of the sacred, may be violated. It means one can act contrary to it, without feeling any fear or qualms of conscience. The sacred is something holy. To transgress it is a sacrilege. Why is a thing made sacred? To confine the scope of the question to the matter in hand, why morality should have been made sacred? Three factors seem to have played their part in making morality sacred. The first factor is the social need for protecting the best. The background of this question lies imbedded in what is called the struggle of existence and the survival of the fittest. This arises out of the theory of evolution. It is common knowledge that evolution takes place through a struggle for existence, because the means of food supply in early times were so limited. The struggle is bitter. Nature is said to be red in claw and tooth. In this struggle which is bitter and bloody only the fittest survive. Such is the original state of society. In the course of



ancient past someone must have raised the question, Is the fittest (the strongest) the best? Would not the weakest if protected be ultimately the best for advancing the ends and aims of society? The then prevailing state of society seems to have given an answer in the affirmative. Then comes the question, what is the way to protect the weak? Nothing less than to impose some restraints upon the fittest. In this lies the origin and necessity for morality.

This morality had to be sacred because it was imposed originally on the fittest, i.e. the strongest. This has very serious consequences. First, does morality in becoming social become anti-social? It is not that there is no morality among thieves. There is morality among businessmen. There is morality among fellow castemen and there is also morality among a gang of robbers. But this morality is marked by isolation and exclusiveness. It is a morality to protect 'group interest'. It is therefore anti-social. It is the isolation and exclusiveness of this kind of morality which throws its anti-social spirit in relief. The same is true where a group observes morality because it has interests of its own to protect. The results of this group organization of society are far-reaching. If society continues to consist of anti-social groups, society will remain a disorganized and a factional society. The danger of a disorganized and factional state of society is that it sets up a number of different models and standards. In the absence of common models and common standards society cannot be a harmonious whole. With such different models and standards it is impossible for the individual to attain consistency of mind. A society which rests upon the supremacy of one group over another irrespective of its rational or proportionate claims inevitably leads to conflict. The only way to put a stop to conflict is to have common rules of morality which are sacred to all. There is the third factor which requires morality to be made sacred and universal. It is to safeguard the growth of the individual. Under the struggle for existence or under group rule the interests of the individuals are not safe. The group set-up prevents an individual from acquiring consistency of mind which is possible only when society has common ideals, common models. His thoughts are led astray and this creates a mind whose seeming unity is forced and distorted. Secondly, the

group set-up leads to discrimination and denial of justice. The group set-up leads to stratification of classes. Those who are masters remain masters and those who are born in slavery remain slaves. Owners remain owners and workers remain workers. The privileged remain privileged and the serfs remain serfs. This means that there can be liberty for some but not for all. This means that there can be equality for a few but none for the majority. . . . The only remedy lies in making fraternity universally effective. . . . Fraternity is nothing but another name for morality. This is why the Buddha preached that Dhamma is sacred. So is morality.



## C

## TYPES OF THEISM

## I

## VEDĀNTIC MONOTHEISM

RAMMOHUN ROY<sup>1</sup>*Tradition and Reason*

When we look to the traditions of ancient nations, we often find them at variance with each other; and when, discouraged by this circumstance, we appeal to reason as a surer guide, we soon find how incompetent it is, alone, to conduct us to the object of our pursuit. We often find that, instead of facilitating our endeavours or clearing up our perplexities, it only serves to generate a universal doubt, incompatible with principles on which our comfort and happiness mainly depend. The best method perhaps is, neither to give ourselves up exclusively to the guidance of the one or the other; but by a proper use of the lights furnished by both, endeavour to improve our intellectual and moral faculties, relying on the goodness of the Almighty Power, which alone enables us to attain that which we earnestly and diligently seek for.

*The Teaching of the Veda*

The Veda from which all Hindu literature is derived, is, in the opinion of the Hindus, an inspired work, coeval with the existence of the world. . . . [The Vedic texts] with great consistency, inculcate the unity of God; instructing men, at the same time, in the pure mode of adoring him in spirit. It will also appear evident that the Vedas, although they tolerate idolatry as the last provision for those who are totally incapable of raising their minds to the contemplation of the invisible God of nature, yet repeatedly urge the relinquishment of the rites of

<sup>1</sup> Rammohun Roy, *English Works*, Part II, pp. 15, 14, 41-2, 63-4, 68, 47, 67, 65, 68, 144-6, 69, 70, 72.

idol-worship, and the adoption of a purer system of religion, on the express ground that the observance of idolatrous rites can never be productive of eternal beatitude. These are left to be practised by such persons only as, notwithstanding the constant teaching of spiritual guides, cannot be brought to see perspicuously the majesty of God through the works of nature. . . . Should this explanation given by the Veda itself, as well as by its celebrated commentator Vyāsa, not be allowed to reconcile those passages which are seemingly at variance with each other, as those that declare the unity of the invisible Supreme Being, with others which describe a plurality of independent visible gods, the whole work must, I am afraid, not only be stripped of its authority, but be looked upon as altogether unintelligible.

The Purāṇa and Tantra, are of course to be considered as Śāstra, for they repeatedly declare God to be one and above the apprehension of external and internal senses; they indeed expressly declare the divinity of many gods and goddesses, and the modes of their worship; but they reconcile those contradictory assertions by affirming frequently, that the directions to worship any figured beings are only applicable to those who are incapable of elevating their minds to the idea of an invisible Supreme Being, in order that such persons, by fixing their attention on those invented figures, may be able to restrain themselves from vicious temptations, and that those that are competent for the worship of the invisible God, should disregard the worship of idols.

### *God, Soul and Universe: Vedāntic Teaching*

The illustrious Vyāsa, in his celebrated work, the Vedānta,<sup>1</sup> insinuates in the first text [sūtra], that it is absolutely necessary for mankind to acquire knowledge respecting the Supreme Being, who is the subject of discourse in all the Vedas, and the Vedānta, as well as in the other systems of theology. But he found, from the following passages of the Vedas, that this inquiry is limited to very narrow bounds, viz.: 'The Supreme Being is not comprehensible by vision, or by any other of the organs of sense; nor can be conceived by means of devotion, or virtuous practices. He sees everything, though never seen; hears everything, though never directly heard of. He is neither short, nor is he

<sup>1</sup> This is the *Vedānta Sūtras* or the *Brahma Sūtras*.—Ed.



long; inaccessible to the reasoning faculty; not to be compassed by description; beyond the limits of the explanation of the Veda, or of human conception!' Vyāsa, also, from the result of various arguments coinciding with the Veda, found that the accurate and positive knowledge of the Supreme Being is not within the boundary of comprehension; i.e. that [the] what, and how, [of] the supreme Being, cannot be definitely ascertained. He has, therefore, in the second text, explained the Supreme Being by his effects and works, without attempting to define his essence; in like manner as we, not knowing the real nature of the sun, explain him to be the cause of the succession of days and epochs. 'He by whom the birth, existence, and annihilation of the world is regulated, is the Supreme Being.' We see the multifarious, wonderful universe, as well as the birth, existence, and annihilation of its different parts; hence, we naturally infer the existence of a Being who regulates the whole, and call him the Supreme: in the same manner as from the sight of a pot we conclude the existence of its artificer. The Veda, in like manner, declares the Supreme Being thus: 'He from whom the universal world proceeds, who is the Lord of the Universe', and 'whose work is the universe, is the Supreme Being'.

God is the efficient cause of the universe, as a potter is of earthen pots, and he is also the material cause of it, the same as the earth is the material cause of the different earthen pots, or as a rope, at an inadvertent view taken for a snake, is the material cause of the conceived existence of the snake, which appears to be true by the support of the real existence of the rope. So says the Vedānta.

The Vedānta by declaring that 'God is everywhere, and everything is in God', means that nothing is absent from God, and nothing bears real existence except by the volition of God, whose existence is the sole support of the conceived existence of the universe, which is acted upon by him in the same manner as a human body is by a soul. But God is at the same time quite different from what we see or feel.

In answer to the following questions, viz. 'How can the Supreme Being be supposed to be distinct from, and above all existing creatures, and at the same time omnipresent? How is it possible that he should be described by properties inconceivable by reason, as seeing without eye, and hearing without

ear?' To these questions the Vedānta, in chapter second, replies, 'In God are all sorts of power and splendour'. And the following passages of the Veda also declare the same: 'God is all-powerful'; and 'It is by his supremacy that he is in possession of all powers'; i.e. what may be impossible for us is not impossible for God, who is the Almighty, and the sole Regulator of the Universe.

The soul cannot be inferred from the following texts to be the Lord of the Universe, nor the independent ruler of the intellectual powers, viz.: 'The Soul being joined to the resplendent Being, enjoys by itself', 'God and the soul enter the small void space of the heart'; because the Veda declares that 'He [God] resides in the soul as its Ruler', and that 'The soul being joined to the gracious Being, enjoys happiness'.

Some celestial gods have, in different instances, declared themselves to be independent deities, and also the objects of worship; but these declarations were owing to their thoughts being abstracted from themselves and their being entirely absorbed in divine reflection. The Vedānta declares: 'This exhortation of Indra (or the god of the atmosphere) respecting his divinity, [is] indeed agreeable to the authorities of the Veda'; [because] 'Every one, on having lost all self-consideration in consequence of being united with divine reflection, may speak as assuming [himself] to be the Supreme Being; like Vāmadeva (a celebrated Brāhmaṇa) who, in consequence of such self-forgetfulness, declared himself to have created the sun, and Manu, the next person to Brahmā'. It is therefore optional with every one of the celestial gods, as well as with every individual, to consider himself as God, under the state of self-forgetfulness and unity with the Divine reflection, as the Veda says, 'You are that true Being' (when you lose all self-consideration), and 'O God, I am nothing but you'. The sacred commentators have made the same observation, viz.: 'I am nothing but true Being and am pure Understanding, full of eternal happiness, and am by nature free from worldly effects.' But in consequences of this reflection, none of them can be acknowledged to be the cause of the universe or the object of adoration.



*The Doctrine of Māyā*

Māyā is the creating power of the eternal God, and consequently it is declared by the Vedānta to be eternal: 'Māyā has no separate existence; it is the power of God' and is known 'by its effects as heat is the power of fire and has no separate existence, yet is known from its effects' (quoted in the Vedānta). . . . The world, as the Vedānta says is the effect of Māyā, and is material but God is mere spirit, whose particular influences being shed upon certain material objects are called souls in the same manner as the reflections of the sun are seen on water placed in various vessels. As these reflections of the sun seem to be moved by the motion of the water of those vessels without effecting any motion in the sun, so souls, being, as it were, the reflections of the Supreme Spirit on matter, seem to be affected by such circumstances. As some reflections are bright from the purity of the water on which they are cast, while others seem obscure owing to its foulness, so some souls are more pure from the purity of the matter with which they are connected, while others are dull owing to the dullness of matter. . . . As the reflections of the sun, though without light proper to themselves, appear splendid from their connection with the illuminating sun, so the soul, though not true intellect, seems intellectual and acts as if it were real spirit from its actual relation to the Universal Intellect; and as from the particular relations of the sun to the water placed in different pots, various reflections appear resembling the same sun in nature and differing from it in qualities; and again as these cease to appear on the removal of the water, so through the peculiar relation of various material objects to one Supreme Spirit numerous souls appear and seem as performing good and evil works, and also receiving their consequences; and as soon as that relation ceases, they, at that very minute cease to appear distinctly from their original. Hence God is one, and the soul, although it is not in fact of a different origin from God, is yet liable to experience the consequence of good and evil works; but this liability of the soul to reward or punishment cannot render God liable to either.

The Vedānta teaches that as bubbles arise from and again are absorbed in water; in like manner through the influence of Māyā the world repeatedly proceeds from, depends upon, and

is absorbed into God. . . . The resemblance of the bubbles with the world is maintained by the Vedānta only in two respects; first, as the bubbles receive from water through the influence of the wind, their birth and existence, so the world takes by the power of God, its original existence from the Supreme Being and depends upon him; and secondly, that there is no reality in the existence either of bubbles or of the world. When we say such a one is like a lion, we mean resemblance only in respect of courage and strength and not in every respect, as in point of shape, size, etc. In like manner the resemblance of the world to bubbles, in this instance, lies in point of dependence and unreality. Were the similarity acknowledged in every respect we must admit God to be an insensitive existence like a portion of water and the world as a bubble to be a small part of God moving sometimes on the surface of the Deity and again uniting with him.

The term Māyā implies, primarily, the power of creation, and secondarily, its effect, which is the Universe. The Vedānta, by comparing the world with the misconceived notion of a snake, when a rope really exists, means that the world, like the supposed snake, has no independent existence, that it receives its existence from the Supreme Being. In like manner the Vedānta compares the world with a dream; as all the objects seen in a dream depend upon the motion of the mind, so the existence of the world is dependent upon the being of God, who is the only object of supreme love; and in declaring that God is all in all and that there is no other substance except God, the Vedānta means that existence in reality belongs to God alone. He is consequently true and omnipresent; nothing else can bear the name of true existence.

### *Worship of God*

The following passages of the Veda affirm that God is the sole object of worship, viz. 'Adore God alone'; 'Know God alone'; 'give up all other discourse'. And the Vedānta says, that 'It is found in the Vedas that none but the Supreme Being is to be worshipped, nothing excepting him should be adored by a wise man'. . . . Moreover, the Vedānta declares that 'Vyāsa is of opinion that "the adoration of the Supreme Being is required of mankind"'. . . .



The Veda illustrates the mode in which we should worship the Supreme Being, viz.: 'To God we should approach', of him we 'should hear, of him we should think, and to him we should attempt to approximate'. . . . By hearing of God is meant hearing his declarations, which establish his unity; and by thinking of him is meant thinking of the contents of his law; and by attempting to approximate to him is meant attempting to apply our minds to that true Being on which the diffusive existence of the universe relies, in order that by means of the constant practice of this attempt we may approach to him. The Vedānta states, that 'Constant practice of devotion is necessary, it being represented so by the Veda'; and also adds that 'We should adore God till we approach to him, and even then not forsake his adoration, such authority being found in the Veda'. . . . The Vedānta shows that moral principle is a part of the adoration of God. . . . The Veda also positively asserts that 'He who in life was devoted to the Supreme Being, shall [after death] be absorbed in him, and again be neither liable to birth nor death, reduction nor augmentation'.

## 2

## PERSONAL THEISM

DEBENDRANATH TAGORE<sup>1</sup>

What we want is to worship God. If the worshipper and the object of worship become one, then how can there be any worship? Therefore we could not subscribe to the doctrines of the Vedānta philosophy. We were opposed to monism just in the same way as we were opposed to idolatry. We were unable to fully acquiesce in the commentaries of the Upaniṣads as made by Śaṅkarācārya, inasmuch as he has tried to interpret them all in a monistic sense.

If I could preach the Brahma Dharma as based upon the Vedānta, then all India would have one religion, all dissension would come to an end, all would be united in a common

<sup>1</sup> Debendranath Tagore, *Autobiography*, pp. 72, 102, 109, 160-2; 199, 165, 273-4, 278-9.

brotherhood, her former valour and power would be revived, and finally she would regain her freedom. Such were the lofty aspirations which my mind then entertained. . . . On investigation I found there were 147 Upaniṣads. . . . Formerly I did not know of the existence of this thorny tangle of Upaniṣads. Only eleven Upaniṣads were known to me, with the help of which I had started the propagation of Brahma Dharma, making them its foundation. But now I saw that even this foundation was shaky and built upon sand; even here I did not touch firm ground. First I went back to the Vedas, but could not lay the foundation of the Brahma Dharma there; then I came to the eleven authentic Upaniṣads, but how unfortunate! even there I could not lay the foundation. Our relation with God is that of worshipper and worshipped—this is the very essence of Brahmaism. When we found the opposite conclusion to this arrived at in Śankarācārya's *Śārīrakamīmāṃsā* of the Vedānta Darśana, we could no longer place any confidence in it; nor could we accept it as a support of our religion. I had thought that if I renounced the Vedānta Darśana and accepted the eleven Upaniṣads only, I would find a support for Brahmaism; hence I had relied entirely upon these, leaving aside all else. But when in the Upaniṣads I came across 'I am He' and 'Thou art That', then I became disappointed in them also.

These Upaniṣads could not meet all our needs; could not fill our hearts. Then what was to be done now? What hope was there for us? Where should we seek a refuge for Brahmaism? It could not be founded on the Vedas, it could not be founded on the Upaniṣads. Where was its foundation to be laid? . . . I came to see that the pure heart, filled with the light of intuitive knowledge—this was its basis. Brahman reigned in the pure heart alone. The pure, unsophisticated heart was the seat of Brahmaism. We could accept those texts only of the Upaniṣads which accorded with that heart. Those sayings which disagreed with the heart we could not accept. These were the relations which were now established between ourselves and the Upaniṣads, the highest of all śāstras. In the Upaniṣad itself we read that God is revealed through worship to the heart illumined by an intellect free from all doubt. To the soul of the righteous is revealed the wisdom of God. The Ṛṣi of old who by means of contemplation and the grace of wisdom had seen the Perfect



Brahman in his own pure heart, records his experience in these words: 'The pure in spirit, enlightened by wisdom, sees the holy God by means of worship and meditation.' . . . These words accorded with the experience of my own heart, hence I accepted them.

[Some one came to me and] said, 'But I revere this saying of the Scriptures above all others, "I am the Supreme Deity, eternal, free and self-existent; I am none other"'. . . . If he had put forward some other proud claim such as, 'I am wealthy, I am lord over many: who is there equal to me?'—then there would have been some sense in his claim. But that I myself am the Supreme Deity—such vaunting is the source of much evil; one feels ashamed at the very idea. Bound as we are by a thousand worldly coils—steeped as we are in decay and sorrow, sin and evil—what is more strange than that we should consider ourselves eternal, free, and self-existent? Śankarācārya has turned India's head by preaching the doctrine of Monism: the identity of God and man.

Again, when I saw in the Upaniṣads that the worship of Brahman leads to Nirvāṇa, my soul was dismayed at the idea: 'Deeds, together with the sentient soul, all become one in Brahman.' If this means that the sentient soul loses its separate consciousness, then this is not the sign of salvation but of terrible extinction. What a vast difference between the eternal progress of the soul according to the Brahma Dharma on the one hand, and this salvation by annihilation of the other! This Nirvāṇa-salvation of the Upaniṣads did not find a place in my heart.

O Men, Him you know not, who created heaven and earth and all that is in them. By His will the sun shines and illumines this world; by His will the moon sheds her ambrosial light by night, nourishing plants and trees.—He dwelleth within you, distinct from all else, in the inmost recesses of your souls. The God who dwelleth within your heart of hearts, you know not; and how should you know Him, when you go about the world enveloped in the darkness of ignorance as in a thick cloud, engaged in vain wrangling, allured by pleasures of the senses, and spending your days in a round of useless rites and ceremonies. If you wish

to know the Highest, the Para-Brahman, you must enrich your minds with wisdom and knowledge, embrace the truth in word and in deed, bring your senses under the subjection of moral laws, and renouncing all desire for reward, pray and strive for true Salvation (*mukti*).

The soul is neither hand nor foot, nor eye nor ear, nor is it the organs of smell or speech. The soul is that which sees with the eye, hears with the ear, grasps with the hand, walks with the feet. When, through meditation, we come to know the soul, we become privileged to see the Supreme Spirit. As we cannot see the master of the house without entering it, so we must go into the chamber of the soul before we can see the Lord, its master. It is from the knowledge of the self, the Ego, that we rise to the knowledge of God. Hence it behoves thee, first of all, to know thyself; the self that sees, feels, hears, thinks, understands.

Now on what does this soul rest? To this question the answer is, that the soul rests in the Eternal, the Supreme Spirit. When the human soul, feeling itself to be homeless, seeks its life's refuge, and calm, tranquil, and chastened by discipline, becomes pure and undefiled, then it sees God within, and hears His thrilling, living voice: . . . 'I am Brahman in thy soul. Take refuge in Me and thou shalt be free from sin and anguish'. . . . We cannot hear that soul-stirring voice, that sweet, consoling message with our bodily ear; but it can be heard when we are absorbed in contemplation and inspired by spiritual wisdom.

When by purity of life and spiritual culture the soul attains to a state in which it is filled with a deep yearning after the Lord, so that it cannot be without Him—to such a pure and devout soul doth the Lord reveal Himself. O seek Him, the Indwelling Spirit, within thy soul, and not in the empty space. As blood and breath are the life of the body, so the life of the soul is God. Blessed is he who hath entered into holy communion with this Brahman. Such fellowship, commenced here on earth, never ends. Even though the body lies here forsaken the soul enters into life everlasting, and attains all its desires in union with the Eternal. Such a union is the crown of our desires, our heaven, our salvation.



## 3

## RATIONAL THEISM

SWAMI DAYANANDA SARASWATI<sup>1</sup>

Q. You talk glibly of God. But how do you prove His existence?

A. By means of all kinds of proofs, called the testimony of the sense-perception, and the like, and logical tests . . . . The perception of God results from the perception of the wondrous design in the visible world and of the phenomena of knowledge and virtue. When the mind or soul impels the will or conative power, and the will incites the senses towards any object, whether it be theft or other vices or beneficence and other virtues, and when it begins to do the thing, its desires and judgment are bent upon that desired object. At such a time fear, doubt, and shame rise in the self-consciousness for evil works, and boldness, conviction, joy, and encouragement for good works. This internal voice or impulse is not from the ego, but from the Infinite Spirit. When the mind is engaged in contemplating God in all its purity of intent, it perceives both of them (God and soul). When God is evident from perceptual evidence, what doubt can there be in the evidence of inference and other logical tests of the knowledge of God? For, the knowledge of the effect leads to that of the cause. . . . He is omnipresent. For, had He been limited to one locality, He could not have been the inner soul of all, omniscient, all-controlling, all creating, all-sustaining, and all-destroying. For, the action of a doer is impossible of happening at a place lying beyond his influence.

Q. Is God Merciful and Just?

A. Yes, He is.—The object of punishment is to deter people from doing evil and suffering pain. Mercy is to relieve persons of pain. . . . It is the great mercy of God that He had bestowed upon all creatures the entire number of objects after creating them in the world for their use. What can be greater mercy than

<sup>1</sup> Swami Dayananda Saraswati, *Satyārtha Prakāśh*, Eng. Trans., pp. 209-12, 218-22, 257, 260, 262-5. The present editor has abridged, altered and edited this translation at a few places by comparison with the original.

that? Now, the advantage of justice is self-evident inasmuch as the existence of pleasure and pain, to a greater or less extent, among the people point out the consequences of their deeds.

Q. Is God corporeal or incorporeal?

A. Incorporeal; for, had He been corporeal, He could not have been all-pervading, and absence of omnipresence in Him would have made the ascription of omniscience and other attributes inconsistent. For, a limited object has limited qualities, nature and action. Also, such a limited being can not be free from heat and cold, hunger and thirst, disease, evil, mortification, separation, and other kinds of suffering. These considerations lead us to the only conclusion that God is immaterial or formless.

Q. Is God almighty?

A. Yes, He is. But He is not what you mean by the word almighty. It means that God stands in need of nobody's least help in doing his work of creation, preservation, and destruction, and in doing equitable justice to souls according to their merits and demerits. In other words, He accomplishes all His works out of His own infinite power.

Q. We believe God does what He likes, for there is none over Him.

A. What does He like? If you say that He likes all and can do all, we ask you if He can kill Himself, create many gods, make Himself ignorant, commit theft, adultery, and other evils, and suffer pain? Since these things are against His nature, incompatible with His attributes and actions, your assertion that He can do all, falls to the ground, being inapplicable in the case of God. Hence, the meaning of the word almighty which we have given, is the only true one.

Q. Is God unbeginning?

A. Yes, He is. Unbeginning is one which has no first cause or time of commencement.

Q. What does God want?

A. He wishes good to all and wants that all should acquire ease and comfort, with liberty and without committing sin. He makes none dependent upon others.

Q. Is it proper to sing the glory of, pray to, and meditate on Him.

A. Yes, it is.



Q. Will God remove or pardon the sins of the person who sings His glory, prays to Him, and thinks of Him, by setting aside His laws?

A. No.

Q. Then what is the use of singing His glory, praying to and thinking of Him? . . .

A. The fruit of singing the glory of the Lord is the love of God and improvement of a devotee's nature, qualities and deeds by the influence of those of the Divinity. The fruit of prayer is humility, zeal, and the obtainment of help. The advantage of meditation is communion with the Supreme Being and the realization of Him.

God is not the material cause of the universe, but He is only the instrumental or efficient cause of it. If the world had been produced from Supreme Spirit, it would have shared His divine attributes and all things would also have been spirit. And, God would have been liable to change as the material cause. But as it is not so, God is not the material cause of the world but is only the efficient or intelligent cause of it, while beginningless matter (*prakṛti*) is its material cause.

Q. Does God take on flesh, or does the incarnation of God ever take place?

A. No; God never incarnates. Says the *Yajur Veda*: 'The unitary God is unborn. He is holy and immaterial', and so forth. These authorities prove that God is never born.

Q. Does God forgive the sins of His saints and devotees?

A. No. For, if He forgives their sins, His justice will be done away with, and all the people will turn sinners. Learning that sins are remitted, they will be emboldened and encouraged to commit them.

Q. Is the soul independent or free to act, or is she dependent for her actions on God?

A. She is free to do her duties, but subject to the laws of God.

Q. What do you mean by free or independent?

A. That person is free to whom the body, vital powers, senses, internal sense and other organs are subject. If he be not free to act, he can not be amenable to the consequences of virtue and vice of his actions. . . . If the people do anything by the commandment of or impulse given by God, merit and demerit can

not accrue to them. God will enjoy the fruit of their actions. Heaven or Hell, i.e. pleasure or pain, will come to the lot of God. A man who kills another with some weapon, is alone punished, but not his weapon. In like manner, a dependent soul can not be responsible for the good or evil of her deeds. Hence, the souls are free to act according to their power.

Q. Had God not made the soul and given her power, she could do nothing. Therefore the soul acts from necessity or an impulse from God.

A. The soul is never made or created. She is unbeginning as God, and the material cause of the world is merely an attendant circumstance. The tenement of the soul, the body, and the sockets of the senses are made by God. But they are all subject to the soul. He who sins either by thought, speech, or action, alone suffers the consequences of his doings, but not God.

Q. What kind of form, qualities, character, and nature have the soul and God?

A. They are both intelligences, and their nature is holy, immortal, and righteous. But God's actions are the making of the world, its preservation, and its destruction, keeping all things in their respective spheres and subjecting them to laws, the awarding of rewards and punishments to virtue and vice, and the like virtuous duties. The functions of the soul are the propagation of the species, the preservation of the offspring, manufacture and other professions, doing good or evil. The attributes of God are eternal knowledge, happiness, omnipotence, and other infinite powers. The qualities of the soul are: *Ichhā*: the desire to obtain things; *dveṣa*: hatred of pain and other evils; *prayatna*: courage and strength; *sukha*: pleasure; *duḥkha*: bewailing and sadness; *jnāna*: discernment, knowledge, remembrance. These are the qualities of the soul common to the Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika. But the latter also has *prāṇa*: outbreath; *āpāna*: inbreath; *nimeṣa*: closing the eyes; *unmeṣa*: opening them; *manah*: faith, memory, consciousness; *gati*: motion; *indriya*: regulation of the senses; *antarvikāra*: hunger, thirst, joy, sorrow and other affections; which qualities of the soul are distinct from those of God.

Q. God sees the past, present, and future. He, therefore, knows what will happen in the future. Whatever He determines, the soul will act upon. So the soul is not free, and God cannot



with justice punish her; for, she does what God has resolved in virtue of His fore-knowledge.

A. To say that God is the seer of three divisions of time, is an act of folly. For, the past is what was and is not now, and the future is what will happen, having not been in existence as yet. Does God forget what He knew in the past? Will He know what He does know at present? Hence God's knowledge is always uniform, without break, constant and present. The past and present are spoken of by men. But with reference to the knowledge of human deeds, it can be said that God is the seer of the three divisions of time. With regard to God himself, they do not exist in Him. What man does out of his freedom, God knows in virtue of His omniscience. The souls act as God knows, that is, God is free in His knowledge of the past, present, and future, and in doing justice to souls according to their merits. The souls are also free to some extent in the present and quite free to act. In virtue of God's knowledge being unbeginning, His knowledge both of souls' deeds and of punishing the violation of His laws is unbeginning. Both kinds of knowledge are true.

The soul is grosser than God, and God is more delicate than the soul. Consequently God pervades the soul. Besides this relation of the pervader and the pervaded, the other relations between God and man from other points of view are the served and the server, the adored and the adorer, the master and the servant, the king and the subject, the father and the son, and so forth.

Q. Who is fallen or bound in the fetters of sin?

A. The soul who is given to unrighteousness and ignorance.

Q. Are bondage and emancipation, or fall and salvation, natural or accidental, i.e. do they arise from certain occasions or incidents?

A. They are accidental or extraneous; for, had they been natural, there would have been no cessation of them. . . . The soul, being of limited powers, is clouded with darkness; she incarnates by appearing with the body; she gets into trouble by enjoying the fruit of sinful deeds, takes measures to get rid of it, desires to be free from pain, and having been liberated from bodily sufferings and got the happiness of obtaining God, enjoys

the blessing of salvation. . . . Salvation [is that] . . . in which liberty is obtained. Freedom [is] sought from what all souls desire to be free from, viz. from what they most avoid, i.e. pain or misery. After their freedom from pain they get happiness and dwell in God.

Q. What are the means of salvation and what brings about incarnation?

A. They are: The obedience of God's commandments; freedom from irreligion [vice], ignorance, bad company, evil thoughts or associations, and improper sensuousness or indulgence in wicked pleasures; veracity, beneficence, knowledge, impartial justice, devotion to the cause of virtue or religion, remembering God, praying to Him, meditating on Him or introspection, acquiring knowledge, teaching, honest profession, the advancement of knowledge, the adoption of righteous means in affairs, doing everything with impartiality, equity, and righteousness; such and similar other works, which lead to salvation. The works of their opposite nature, such as violation of God's commandments, and similar others, subject souls to the trouble of incarnations.

The soul is not absorbed in God in the state of salvation, but keeps her individual existence. She lives in God. . . . The liberated soul moves about at liberty without any impediment in God, who pervades all, with her knowledge and happiness perfected. It is not right to say that the souls having once obtained salvation will never taste the bitter cup of mortal life again on earth, for it is thus contradicted in the Vedas. . . . It is asked in the Veda: Whose name shall we regard as hallowed? What Deity is always refulgent among the immortal beings, and gives us life again in this world after our enjoyment of the happiness of salvation, and affords us an opportunity to see the father and mother? To it, it is replied: We should regard that glorious, eternal, ever holy and happy Deity's name as hallowed, who provides us with the happiness of heaven, again gives us life on earth through the medium of parentage, and lets us see the face of the father and mother. That Deity regulates salvation and is the overlord of all creatures. (Rig-Veda, I, 24., 1.2.) Kapila says: The bound and liberated souls will always exist in the same way as now. Liberation from bondage is never absolute. In plain words, neither physical life nor salvation are



everlasting. Though many people seem to believe that there is no return to life and death from salvation, . . . this can never be; for first, the powers of the soul, such as the body and other means, are limited. How can the result of their work be unlimited? The souls have no unlimited power, can perform no unlimited action, can adopt no unlimited means to ensure the enjoyment of infinite unending happiness. So they cannot enjoy unending pleasure. Transient means can have no limitless or permanent end. If the souls never return to the world from the state of salvation, the phenomenon of sentient life would disappear altogether from the earth at some time or other, as there would be no souls on earth. . . . The number of souls is limited, so if every liberated soul never returns to life on earth, the world would not continue. . . . But the duration of salvation is that of thirty-six cycles of creation and destruction of the world. It is almost infinite compared to a man's life on earth, and is therefore the greatest good.

## 4

## DIVINE UNION THROUGH BHAKTI

RAMAKRISHNA PARAMAHAMSA<sup>1</sup>*The Ultimate Reality*

I do see that Being as a Reality before my very eyes! Why then should I reason? I do actually see that it is the Absolute who has become all things about us; it is He who appears as the finite soul and the phenomenal world! One must have an awakening of the spirit within to see this Reality. . . . Brahman is without attributes, unchangeable, immovable, and firm like Mount Meru. His name is Intelligence (Cinmaya). His abode is Intelligence, and He, the Lord, is All Intelligence. . . . There is no distinction between Impersonal God (Brahman) on the one hand and Personal God (Śakti) on the other. When the Supreme Being is thought of as inactive, He is styled God the Absolute

<sup>1</sup> *Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna*, pp. 253, 5-7, 370, 373, 375-6, 334, 340-1, 241-3, 151-2, 160, 172-3, 176-7, 179-81, 204-5, 208-9.

(Śuddha Brahman); and when He is thought of as active-creating, sustaining, and destroying—He is styled Śakti or Personal God. . . . God is Absolute, eternal Brahman as well as the Father of the universe. The indivisible Brahman, pure Existence, Intelligence, and Bliss, is like a vast, shoreless ocean without bounds and limits in which I only struggle and sink; but when I approach the ever sportive Personal Deity, Hari, I get peace like the sinking man who finds the shore. . . . To think of Him as formless is quite right. But take care that you do not run away with the idea that that view alone is true and all else is false. Meditating upon Him as a Being with forms is equally right. . . . God the Absolute and God the Personal are one and the same. A belief in the one implies a belief in the other. Thus fire cannot be thought of apart from its burning power; nor can its burning power be thought of apart from the fire. . . . You cannot think of the whiteness of milk apart from the milk, nor of the milk apart from its whiteness. . . . You cannot conceive, think of, or perceive God otherwise than as a Person, so long as you are a person with an Aham or individuality of your own; and so long does the Unconditioned manifest Itself to man—both within and without Him—as a conditioned Being, the Impersonal as a Personal God. . . . I enjoy the Lord not only in His unconditioned state of Oneness, as unqualified Brahman, in Samādhi, but also in His various blessed manifestations through sweet human relationships. So do thou likewise. Be a Jñānī and Bhakta in one.

### *The Status of the World*

When you see everything as the manifestation of the Lord, can you see anything else but the Lord? Surely you cannot see the world (Samsāra), or your family separate from Him. . . . Wherever I live, I see that I am in Ayodhya, the kingdom of Rāma. . . . I ask you, is the world separate from God? If it be so, you are at liberty to forsake it. . . . It was God whom he [a sage] saw both as the manifested world and the unmanifested Self. In His being everything existed. . . . It is unreal so long as you know not God. For you do not yet see Him in everything but fasten yourself to the world with the tie of 'me and mine'. . . . The devotee Rāmaprasād called this world a structure of dreams; but once a man has acquired love for the Lord, this



world is for him,—‘a mansion of joy. I pass my days eating, drinking and rejoicing.’ . . .

### *The Path*

Jñāna-Yoga means communion with God by means of Jñāna. The Jñāni's object is to realize Brahman, the Absolute. . . . Jñāna-Yoga is exceedingly difficult in this age, Kali-Yuga (Iron Age). . . . It is a rare thing—this love of God. Bhakti can arise only when there is a whole-hearted devotion to God such as that of a chaste wife for her husband. Pure Bhakti is very difficult to obtain. In Bhakti, the mind and soul must be absorbed in God. . . . The Bhakta, as a rule, does not long for Brahma-Jñāna, the realization of the Impersonal, but remains content with realising the Divine Person alone, . . . He would fain have sufficient individuality left to enjoy the vision Divine as a Person. He would fain taste sugar, instead of becoming sugar! . . . Pure Knowledge and pure Love are both one and the same. Pure Knowledge leads to the same goal which is reached by pure Devotion (Bhakti). . . . To a Bhakta the Lord manifests Himself in various forms. To one who reaches the height of Brahma-Jñāna in Samādhi, He is the Nirguṇa Brahman once more, Formless (Nirākāra), Unconditioned. Herein is the reconciliation between Jñāna and Bhakti. . . . Let a Bhakta pray to God and it will be given to him to realize the Impersonal God, Brahman, in Samādhi and thus reach the goal of Jñāna-Yoga also. . . . Bhakti-Yoga and not Jñāna-Yoga or Karma-Yoga is the Yuga-Dharma, the adequate path of this age. This means that Jñāna-Vicāra, or the discrimination of God, the only reality, from the unreal universe, and Karma, work without attachment, are far more difficult than Bhakti-Yoga in this age as a method or road leading to God. It does not mean that the goal is different. . . . To find God, you must offer to Him your body, mind, and riches. . . . You will see God if your love for Him is as strong as the attachment of the worldly-minded person for things of the world. . . . These are the stages of Sādhana (devotional practice): . . . 1st, Sādhū-Sanga, i.e. the company of holy men. 2nd, Śraddhā, or faith and devotion to things relating to the Spirit. 3rd, Niṣṭhā, or single-minded devotion to one's ideal. 4th, Bhakti, or intense love for God. 5th, Bhāva, i.e. the state of being struck dumb at the thought of

God. 6th, Mahābhāva: When Bhāva is intensified, it is called Mahābhāva. The devotee sometimes laughs, sometimes weeps, like a madman. He has completely conquered the flesh and has no consciousness of his body. . . . 7th, Prema, i.e. the most intense love for God. It goes hand in hand with Mahābhāva. The two marks of this stage are, first, the forgetfulness of this world; second, a forgetfulness of self, which includes one's own body. This brings the devotee face to face with God, and he thus attains the Goal of life.

## 5

## TO BECOME GOD THROUGH LOVE

RABINDRANATH TAGORE<sup>1</sup>

Essentially man is not a slave either of himself or of the world; but he is a lover. His freedom and fulfilment is in love, which is another name for perfect comprehension. By this power of comprehension, this permeation of his being, he is united with the all-pervading Spirit, who is also the breath of his soul. . . . What is that Spirit? The Upaniṣad says, The being who is in his essence the light and life of all, who is world-conscious, is Brahman. To feel all, to be conscious of everything, is his spirit. We are immersed in his consciousness, body and soul. It is through his consciousness that the sun attracts the earth; it is through his consciousness that the light-waves are being transmitted from planet to planet.

Not only in space, but this light and life, this all-feeling being is in our souls. He is all-conscious in space, or the world of extension; and he is all-conscious in soul, or the world of intension. . . . These ancient seers felt in the serene depth of their mind that the same energy, which vibrates and passes into the endless forms of the world, manifests itself in our inner being as consciousness; and there is no break in unity. For these seers there was no gap in their luminous vision of perfection. They never acknowledged even death itself as creating a chasm in the

<sup>1</sup> Rabindranath Tagore, *Sādhana*, pp. 15, 18, 21, 33, 35-6, 72-5, 79, 81-2, 152, 154-5, 158, 161.



field of reality. They said, His reflection is death as well as immortality. They did not recognize any essential opposition between life and death, and they said with absolute assurance, 'It is life that is death'. They saluted with the same serenity of gladness 'life in its aspect of appearing and in its aspect of departure'.—That which is past is hidden in life, and that which is to come. They knew that mere appearance and disappearance are on the surface like waves on the sea, but life which is permanent knows no decay or diminution. . . . Everything has sprung from immortal life and is vibrating with life, for life is immense.

Man's history is the history of his journey to the unknown in quest of the realization of his immortal self—his soul.—The Upaniṣads say with great emphasis, Know thou the One, the Soul. It is the bridge leading to the immortal being.—This is the ultimate end of man, to find the One which is in him; which is his truth, which is his soul; the key which which he opens the gate of the spiritual life, the heavenly kingdom. . . . The vision of the Supreme One in our own soul is a direct and immediate intuition, not based on any ratiocination or demonstration at all.

In the typical thought of India it is held that the true deliverance of man is the deliverance from *avidyā*, from ignorance. It is not in destroying anything that is positive and real, for that cannot be possible, but that which is negative, which obstructs our vision of truth. . . . It is our ignorance which makes us think that our self, as self, is real, that it has its complete meaning in itself. When we take that wrong view of self then we try to live in such a manner as to make self the ultimate object of our life. Then are we doomed to disappointment like the man who tries to reach his destination by firmly clutching the dust of the road. Our self has no means of holding us, for its own nature is to pass on; and by clinging to this thread of self which is passing through the loom of life we cannot make it serve the purpose of the cloth into which it is being woven. When a man, with elaborate care, arranges for an enjoyment of the self, he lights a fire but has no dough to make his bread with; the fire flares up and consumes itself to extinction, like an unnatural beast that eats its own progeny and dies. . . . It is only *avidyā* which makes the self our fetter by making us think

that it is an end in itself, and by preventing our seeing that it contains the idea that transcends its limits.

The meaning of our self is not to be found in its separateness from God and others, but in the ceaseless realization of Yoga, of union. . . . The separateness of our self has been described by our philosophers as *māyā*, as an illusion, because it has no intrinsic reality of its own. . . . Our self, as a form of God's joy, is deathless. For his joy is *amṛtam*, eternal.

Our self is *māyā* where it is merely individual and finite, where it considers its separateness as absolute; it is *satyam* where it recognizes its essence in the universal and infinite, in the supreme self, in *paramātman*. . . . Then is its *mukti*, its deliverance from the thralldom of *māyā*, of appearance which springs from *avidyā*, from ignorance; its emancipation in *śāntam śivam advaitam*, in the perfect repose in truth, in the perfect activity in goodness, and in the perfect union in love.

The highest wisdom in the East holds that it is not the function of our soul to gain God. . . . All that we can ever aspire to is to become more and more one with God. . . . Yes, we must become Brahman. We must not shrink from avowing this. Our existence is meaningless if we never can expect to realize the highest perfection that there is. . . . But can it then be said that there is no difference between Brahman and our individual soul? Of course the difference is obvious. Call it illusion or ignorance, or whatever name you may give it, it is there. You can offer explanations but you cannot explain it away. . . . Brahman is Brahman, he is the infinite ideal of perfection. But we are not what we truly are; we are ever to become true, ever to become Brahman. . . . This is the truth of our soul, and this is her joy, that she must ever be growing into Brahman, that all her movements should be modulated by this ultimate idea, and all her creations should be given as offerings to the supreme spirit of perfection. . . . The realization of the *paramātman*, the supreme soul, within our *antarātman*, our inner individual soul, is in a state of absolute completion. We cannot think of it as non-existent and depending on our limited powers for its gradual construction. . . . The marriage of supreme love has been accomplished in timeless time. And now goes on the endless *īlā*, the play of love. He who has been gained in eternity is now being pursued in time and space, in



joys and sorrows in this world and in the worlds beyond. When the soul-bride understands this well, her heart is blissful and at rest.

## 6

## OUR KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

K. SATCHIDANANDA MURTY<sup>1</sup>*There is a Universal Awareness of God*

St Bonaventura maintained that though God is immediately present to all, he is 'concealed', that is, he is known only through hints and suggestions. Salutary truth, clear and complete truth regarding God, can be known only from scripture, and the 'fruit of scripture' is the plenitude of eternal felicity. Now is not this view implied in Śāṅkara also? He says that no one would have the desire to know Brahman unless he had learnt to discriminate between the eternal and the fleeting (*nityānītayavastu viveka*), knows that all things of the world are worthless, and has the desire for liberation. Unless he knows the eternal, he cannot discriminate it from the temporal, and unless one has an idea of liberation how should he desire it? . . . So we are all aware of Brahman to some extent, only we do not know him fully, and fuller knowledge is to be had from scripture. As Pascal said, one would not seek God if he had not already found him.

It seems to me that this is a sounder view than that of the Vedānta, which says that Brahman is known from scripture alone, for (there being no eternal scripture) we cannot believe in any claim that a scripture contains revelation, unless we have the prior belief that there is a God who reveals.

Now not only did Śāṅkara say that man can discriminate between the eternal and the temporal, the permanent 'good' and the evanescent 'good' (*śreya*, *preya*), but he also said that of all creatures man *alone* has this power of discrimination, and freedom of will. Śāṅkara does not ask, why is it that man alone has the moral sense, and seeks the eternal? I think the only

<sup>1</sup> K. Satchidananda Murty, *Revelation and Reason in Advaita Vedānta*, pp. 259-62, 320-2, 326-9. (References omitted.)

adequate reply to this could be that moral ideas have developed because humanity has been in intercourse with God. Humanity has hungered after the eternal because the eternal has called to it, and it is because man is in relationship to the Divine that he is better than plants and animals. As Berdyaev said, man without God is no longer a man.

*Atheists Unconscious of their Belief in God:* There are people who think there is no God, either because they do not know that they believe in God, or because the experiences which the theist interprets in terms of God are interpreted otherwise by them. The case is not without an analogy in other situations. Europeans, prior to Rousseau and the Romantic Movement, did not realize the beauties of landscape and mountains, because they did not realize the aesthetic significance of what they saw and nobody trained them to do so; but the capacity to appreciate these was latent in them. Again all of us know that we are bound to die, and that the goods of earthly life are fleeting; but we are not conscious of the full significance of these beliefs (and they are only beliefs which cannot be logically proved); but when they are brought home to us vividly with a full realization of their implications, a new insight into the meaning of life is gained by us, such as the Buddha had when for the first time he *saw* sickness, old age and death, and realized what they meant. Similarly, the sincere atheist has an implicit belief in God, though he is unconscious of it and of its full significance, and though he has not developed it.

*We know God in the Way we know Ourselves and our Fellow-men:* I now come to the question, how is man aware of God? The proper reply is that God, being spirit, cannot be known in any way other than as spirit, that is, in the same way in which we know ourselves and other persons, through immediate awareness. This is endorsed by Eddington who has said that our relationship with God is like that of our relationship with our friends.

The next question is, how do we know ourselves? Here, I think, Śankara's answer is fundamentally correct. According to him the self is not known through inference, but through an immediate apprehension. He asserts that the self is never the object, but always the knower. That which we see, (*say*) 'Rāma going to school', 'Hari praying on the river's bank'—is



not the self, the real 'I', but the body in certain postures and attitudes. Similarly, when it is said 'I am writing', it is not true to say that 'I' = that which is seen as holding the pen and writing. In short, as Śankara himself emphasizes, what is known is never the self, and to attempt to describe it is to reduce it to the status of an object with certain qualities. The 'I' is the common element that runs through all experience, and there is an immediate awareness of this fact; and language cannot deal with this awareness without, to some extent, objectifying the self. For instance, Śankara's frequent talk of the self as 'eternal' commits a linguistic fallacy. My self, e.g. is what I am aware of as 'my activity'. It is neither eternal, nor non-eternal. Talk of the self as 'eternal' objectifies it.

Similarly, the awareness of other persons is a primary, non-inferential awareness, like that of the awareness of oneself; and neither of them is prior to one another, but both of them are present from the beginning and neither of them can arise without the other. If we are not already aware of our fellow-men, no inference could prove their existence; but if we are already in some relationship with them, then solipsism, however ably presented, cannot convince us. There can be no idea of an 'other' unless it is directly experienced, and from the beginning we know the world as a 'common world', shared by ourselves as well as others. Self-awareness, Śankara admits, is presupposed in all knowledge; but he fails to notice that it involves the awareness of other selves, as well as 'things'. Self-awareness can never be awareness of the self as an independent entity, but (as Sureśvara himself recognized) of an 'I' in relation to other things and other 'I's, as well as to an 'Other I', who is wholly unlike the other 'I's. We may call all these 'I's persons, while the supreme 'I' is the Supreme Person, the *Puruṣottama*, God. In all cognition there is an awareness of all these: the self, other selves, the world experienced by all these, and the Supreme Self.

*God, an unique Person:* While the relationship with other persons is such that we always know them as different, God is known not only as present without, but within us, not only above but below (*Brahmaivedam, brahma purastāt, brahma paścāt*). We 'know God', because he confronts us in all experience, and he is present to us, not as present to us from outside,

but as working through us and thinking through us. (*Īśvarah sarvabhūtānām hr̥ddeśerjuna tiṣṭati. Ya ātmānam antaro yamayati.*) Unless man has been confronted by God in this way, unless he has been spoken to and known by God in this way, man would never know God and would never seek to know more about him.

*This is not a Proof:* This awareness carries conviction in proportion to its intensity, comprehensiveness and persistency; but to reduce it to any formal argument of the type 'There is a God, because men have an awareness of him', is to rob it of its distinctive cogency.

*God is the highest Reality:* The mistake of the Advaita Vedānta was not clearly to differentiate the knowledge of God from intellectual knowledge of the type found in science, etc. Knowledge of the latter type can never bring us into personal relationship with others or with God. While we are aware of other persons as soon as they confront us, trust, loyalty and devotion—these alone can beget in us an insight into their nature; so if we wish to *know* God more and more, we should develop a loving trust in him (*bhaktiā mām abhijānāti-Gītā*). As Rāmānuja says, knowledge of God must be of the nature of devotion (*bhaktirūpāpannam jñānam*). When God is so known, we find that we can justly speak of him as wise, loving, etc. This does not mean that 'wisdom inheres in God' or that a 'thing called knowledge is possessed by God.' It only means that on the basis of the relationship which we have with God we are justified in referring to him as 'good', and 'loving'. The conception of God which the religious consciousness justifies and demands can only be a God who is personal, for as Bradley has said: 'The man who demands a reality more solid than that of the religious consciousness knows not what he seeks.'

### *All Knowledge of God is His Disclosure*

Some theologians have attempted to make a sharp distinction between the human discovery of God and God's disclosure of himself to man. It seems to me that this is an extremely difficult thing to do, as no hard-and-fast line could be drawn between the two.

In one sense we may say that all knowledge is revelation, for historians and scientists have to patiently wait for facts and



find them; they cannot make facts. As Śankara said, one can (*so to say*) acquire merit, but one cannot acquire truth; that which is produced cannot be truth. Reality must disclose itself to us.

If this is the case about scientific facts and historical events, much more should it be so about God, for the following reasons:

Firstly, he is not a sensible thing, which we can come across in perceptual experience, but is a self-conscious being, about whom we can know only by coming into personal encounter. We do not know much about the life and purpose of even a human person merely by seeing him from outside, for though we may guess something about his nature from his acts, these guesses are not certain to be right. So the best way to know a person fully is through his self-disclosure to us. On the other hand, we cannot have certain knowledge about God from his acts, because unless we know him, we cannot know with certainty which are his acts.

Secondly, God is not like any other person about whom we can know something in spite of himself, for he is present both in us as well as apart from us; and whatever we do or know is willed by him. So if at all we have knowledge of God, it is because he has revealed himself. A knowledge of God, in whatever way we may think we have arrived at it, comes ultimately from God.

It follows from this that revelation is not something wholly different from the cognitive and conative processes that occur in the case of creative thinkers and artists. After laborious days spent in disciplining natural inclinations, and following a search which claims his devotion, a man may suddenly find that he has come to possess a new idea, which is not a deduction from his previous knowledge, but is (*so to say*) a 'leap' to a new level of apprehension, which is recognized by him as that which he has been groping after. . . . The difference between a religious revelation and creative inspiration is that in religious revelation, man receives the impact of a Presence, and a 'sense of fullness of mutual relation' between himself and this Presence, by virtue of which his whole way of living is reintegrated.

*God is Postulated by 'Reason'*

From what we have said in the previous section, it would follow

that the so-called theistic proofs cannot prove the existence of God; but at the same time it is hard to agree with Prof. Laird that the 'failure of demonstration is a failure'. The Vedāntins are right when they say that these proofs (i) support theism, provided we have a knowledge of God from other sources, inasmuch as they serve as meditations on God (as Udayana said), and (ii) even independently, they serve as *yuktis* which are no worse than other *yuktis*, and may in a sense be preambles to faith; and (iii) they may help even a man who thinks himself to be an atheist to examine the grounds of his atheism, and find out whether it is at all impossible that he should have repressed his belief in God. When reflected upon with understanding, the traditional theistic proofs may come to be a necessary dialectic moment in the process of knowing God, for, after all, they embody the 'metaphysical experience' of some of the greatest thinkers that history has known and have in turn impressed some of the best minds. If Cook Wilson was right when he said that 'the true business of philosophy is to bring the belief to a consciousness of itself', theistic proofs may rank as philosophy.

As was said in the beginning itself, in the previous section we used 'reason' in the sense of Kant's *verstand* (*anumiti jñāna*), and Locke's 'illation' or 'inference', and we maintained that any revelation cannot be contradictory to reason in that sense, though all genuine revelation is above it. But there is another sense in which 'reason' is sometimes used. For example, Plotinus said: 'He who tries to rise above reason, falls outside of it', 'Nous is King'. Here obviously Plotinus refers to the consciousness, which, according to Plato, can apprehend the world of Ideas. It is 'Transcendental Feeling', which, says Stewart, is the 'beginning and end of metaphysics', 'manifested normally as Faith in the Value of Life'. In this sense 'reason' is what Kant has called '*Vernunft*', which according to him is ineradicably metaphysical.

Now, Kant says that the systematic unity of all knowledge of nature is a *naturale desiderium* of 'reason' in this sense and that this cannot be achieved unless God is postulated.

From another side eminent thinkers have argued that the experience of the finite leads us to posit the infinite; both the ontological argument and the argument *a contingentia mundi*



are based on this need to postulate the Infinite. . . . Thought, as Hegel said, has to make the passage from the finite to the infinite, and he who says that there must be no such passage says that there must be no thinking. It would appear that Hegel here uses 'thought' in the sense of Kant's *Vernunft*. Now Kant himself admits that the ideas of Reason 'are not arbitrarily invented; they are imposed by the nature of reason itself, and therefore stand in necessary relation to the whole employment of understanding'.

It would seem from this that two such formidable authorities as Kant and Hegel maintain that God is a necessary postulate of reason; and both of them apparently agree that we have no direct experience of God, and that God cannot be established by a logically necessary theoretic inference. Yet it seemed to them that to acknowledge the finiteness of the world, and not to affirm God as its ground or sufficient reason is a species of unreason, almost a self-contradiction. The only thing to do was to speak of a process of 'postulation', 'presumption', or 'positing'; and I suggest that this 'postulation' is similar to the *arthāpatti* of Advaita Vedānta. It is neither inference nor perception, but another way of cognition, a *pramāṇa*, and is the function of mind in its *vernunft* aspect. In a suggestive passage in *Theodicy*, Leibniz has distinguished between 'conjecture' and 'presumption'. 'Presumption', he says, is that 'which must provisionally pass for truth in case the contrary is not proved'. This method is, as Prof. Kemp Smith showed, 'identical in general character with the hypothetical method of the natural sciences. It proceeds by enquiring what conditions must be postulated in order that the admittedly given may be explained and accounted for.'

The existence of the external world and other selves are postulates of all experience, while the belief in the rational order of nature is a postulate of science. Neither logical demonstration nor inductive generalization can justify these postulates; but the method of *arthāpatti* 'demonstrates' that these beliefs are implicit in experience. Now I wish to suggest that since some of the greatest thinkers have *demonstrated* the existence of God to be a 'necessary belief' (Kant) involved in all experience, we have every reason to take it as a valid belief on a par with other beliefs such as the existence of other selves, an order in nature etc. If Collingwood is right when he says that 'philoso-

phic reason leads to no conclusions which we did not in some sense know already', 'but brings us to know in a different way things which we already know in some way', then we may not be wrong in saying that philosophy vindicates theism.

It is strange that though the Advaitā Vedānta recognized *arthāpatti* as a method of proof distinct from inferential reasoning, it could not conceive it as an independent source of knowledge of God; but Advaitins recognised that *arthāpatti* could be a method of proof based on scripture. Now I maintain that just as all inference, though ultimately based on the premises supplied by perception, is a source of knowledge, even so *arthāpatti* based on our experience is a source of knowledge regarding God, for it shows that belief in God is the ultimate presupposition of all experience; and since *arthāpatti* is only a non-discursive functioning of reason, we may say that in one sense 'reason' leads us to God.

To this Kant would object that God cannot be a phenomenal object, i.e. that though he may be a necessary postulate of reason, he cannot be an object within the limits of 'experience', as Kant conceived it (viz. empirical knowledge within space and time). In reply to such an objection, our reaction (as Prof. Emmett said) would be to ask, what serious religious thinker has ever thought that God is a phenomenal object?



## D

# VARIETIES OF IDEALISM

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## I

### THE QUEST FOR UNITY

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA<sup>1</sup>

The theme of the Upaniṣads is to find an ultimate unity of things. Knowledge is nothing but finding unity in the midst of diversity. Every science is based upon this; all human knowledge is based upon the finding of unity in the midst of diversity. . . . Nearly every chapter (of the Upaniṣads) begins with Dualistic teaching, *Upāsanā*. God is first taught as someone who is the Creator of this universe, its Preserver, and unto whom everything goes at last. He is one to be worshipped, the Ruler, the Guide of nature, external and internal, yet appearing as if He were outside of nature and external. One step farther, and we find the same teacher teaching that this God is not outside of nature, but immanent in nature. And at last both ideas are discarded, and whatever is real is He; there is no difference. 'Śvetaketu, That thou art'. That Immanent one is at last declared to be the same that is in the human soul.

Modern science [has] found that even in the midst of the variety of forces there is unity. . . . But this has been done even in the Ṛig-Veda Samhitā. . . . All the forces, whether you call them gravitation, or attraction, or repulsion, whether expressing themselves as heat, or electricity, or magnetism, are nothing but the variations of that unit energy. Whether they express themselves as thought, reflected from *Antahkarana*, the inner organs of man, or as action from an external organ, the unit from which they spring is what is called the *Prāṇa*. *Prāṇa* is *Spandanā* or vibration. When all this universe shall have resolved back into its primal state, what becomes of this infinite

<sup>1</sup> Swami Vivekananda, *Advaita Vedānta, The Scientific Religion*, pp. 9-16, 20-4, 32-9, 41-56.

force? . . . If it became extinct, what would be the cause of the next wave, because the motion is going in wave forms, rising, falling, rising again, falling again? . . . They are resolved back into the primal *Prāṇa*, and this *Prāṇa* becomes almost motionless—not entirely motionless. . . . And what becomes of what you call matter? The forces permeate all matter; they all dissolve into *Ākāśa*, from which they again come out; this *Ākāśa* is the primal form of matter. This *Ākāśa* vibrates under the action of *Prāṇa*, and when the next *sṛṣṭi* is coming up, as the vibration becomes quicker, the *Ākāśa* is lashed into all these wave forms which we call suns, and moons, and systems. . . . There is the unity of force, *Prāṇa*; there is the unity of matter called *Ākāśa*. Is there any unity to be found among them again? Can they be melted into one? Our modern science is mute here, it has not yet found its way out. . . . The next unity is the omnipresent impersonal Being known by its old mythological name as *Brahmā*, the four-headed *Brahmā*, and psychologically called *Mahat*. This is where the two unite. What is called your mind is only a bit of this *Mahat* caught in the trap of the brain, and the sum-total of all minds caught in the meshes of brains is what you call *Samaṣṭi*, the aggregate, the universal. . . . The mind is matter, only finer. The body is gross, and behind the body is what we call the *sūkṣma śarīra*, the fine body or mind. This is also material, only finer; and it is not the *Ātman*.

The next thing to understand is this. The question arose, that this body is the name of one continuous stream of matter; every moment we are adding material to it, and every moment material is being thrown off by it, like a river continually flowing, vast masses of water always changing places; yet all the same, we take up the whole thing in imagination, and call it the same river. What do we call the river? . . . It is the name of this series of changes. . . . We shall regard the mind as a similar river, continually filling itself at one end, and emptying itself at the other end. Where is that unity which we call the *Ātman*? The idea is this, that in spite of this continuous change in the body, and in spite of this continuous change in the mind, there is in us something that is unchangeable, which makes our ideas of things appear unchangeable. When rays of light coming from different quarters fall upon a screen, or a wall, or upon something that is not changeable, then and then alone it is



possible for them to form a unity, then and then alone, it is possible for them to form one complete whole. Where and upon which, as it were, the various ideas will come to unity and become one complete whole? This certainly cannot be the mind itself, seeing that it also changes. Therefore there must be something which is neither the body nor the mind, something which changes not, something permanent, upon which all our ideas, our sensations, fall to form a unity and a complete whole, and this is the real soul, the Ātman, of man. And seeing that everything material, whether you call it fine matter, or mind, must be changeful, seeing that what you call gross matter, the external world, must also be changeful in comparison to that, . . . this unchangeable something, cannot be of material substance, therefore it is spiritual, that is to say, it is not matter; it is indestructible, unchangeable.

There is still a unity of idea among the souls, a unity of feeling, of sympathy. How is it possible that my soul can act upon your soul, where is the medium through which it can work, where is the medium through which it can act? How is it I can feel anything about your souls? What is it that is in touch both with your soul and with my soul? Therefore there is a metaphysical necessity of admitting another soul, for it must be a soul which acts in contact with all the different souls, and in and through matter; one Soul which covers and interpenetrates all the infinite number of souls in the world, in and through which they live, in and through which they sympathize, and love, and work for one another. And this universal Soul is Paramātman, the Lord God of the Universe. Again, it follows that because the Soul is not made of matter, since It is spiritual, It cannot obey the laws of matter, it cannot be judged by the laws of matter. It is therefore unconquerable, birthless, deathless and changeless.

The difficulty is here: . . . Ātman and Paramātman are both called substance, to which the mind and body and so-called substances adhere like so many qualities. Nobody has ever seen a substance, none can ever conceive; what is the use of the thinking of this substance? Why not . . . say that whatever exists is this succession of mental currents and nothing more? They do not adhere to each other, they do not form a unit, [but] one is chasing the other, like waves in the ocean, never complete, never forming one unit-whole. Man is a succession of

waves, and when one goes away it generates another, and the cessation of these wave-forms is what is called Nirvāna.—The idea of a God that is omnipresent, and yet is a Person who creates without hands, and moves without feet, and so on, and who has created the universe as a *kumbhakāra* (potter) creates a *ghaṭa* (pot), the Buddhist declares, is childish, and that if this is God, he is going to fight this God and not worship it. This universe is full of misery; if it is the work of a God, we are going to fight this God. And secondly, this God is illogical and impossible, as all of you are aware. We need not go into the defects of the 'design' theory, as all our *Kṣāṇikas* (upholders of the doctrine of momentariness) have shown them full well; and so this Personal God fell to pieces.

How will you prove His existence and His Guṇas, and an infinite number of souls which are substances, and each soul an individual? In what are you an individual? You are not [an individual] as a body, for you know today better than even the Buddhists of old knew, that what may have been matter in the sun has just now become matter in you, and will go out and become matter in the plants; then where is your individuality? The same applies to the mind.—You have one thought tonight and another tomorrow. You do not think the same way as you thought when you were a child, and old men do not think the same way as they did when they were young. Where is your individuality then? Do not say it is in consciousness, this *Ahamkāra* (ego sense), because this only covers a small part of your existence. While I am talking to you, all my organs are working and I am not conscious of it. If consciousness is the proof of existence they do not exist then, because I am not conscious of them. Where are you then with your Personal God theories? How can you prove such a God? Again, the Buddhists will stand up and declare,—not only is it illogical, but immoral, for it teaches man to be a coward and to seek assistance outside, and nobody can give him such help. Here is the universe, man made it; why then depend on an imaginary being outside, whom nobody ever saw or felt, or got help from? Why then do you make cowards of yourselves, and teach your children that the highest state of man is to be like a dog, and go crawling before this imaginary being, saying that you are weak and impure, and that you are everything vile in this universe?



[So]this cannot be proved, this idea of a Personal God creating the world.—Has ever your Personal God, the Creator of the world, to whom you cry all your life, helped you?—[This] is the next challenge from modern science. . . . Any help you have had could have been got by your own exertions, and better still, you need not have spent your energy in that crying.—Along with this idea of a Personal God comes tyranny and priestcraft.—Why was it invented? Because some strong men in old times got people into their hands and said, you must obey us or we will destroy you.

Here is the way to get out. Take up the first objection, the metaphysical one, that substance and qualities are different. Says the Advaitin, they are not. There is no difference between substance and qualities. You know the old illustration, how the rope is taken for the snake, and when you see the snake you do not see the rope at all, the rope has vanished. Dividing the thing into substance and quality, is a metaphysical something in the brains of philosophers, for never can they be in effect outside. You see qualities if you are an ordinary man, and substance if you are a great Yogi, but you never see both at the same time. So, Buddhists, your quarrel about substance and qualities has been but a miscalculation which does not stand in fact. But, if substance is unqualified, there can only be one. If you take qualities off from the soul, and show that these qualities are in the mind, really superimposed on the soul, then there can never be two souls, for it is qualification that makes the difference between one soul and another. How do you know that one soul is different from the other? Owing to certain differentiating marks, certain qualities. And where qualities do not exist, how can there be differentiation? Therefore there are not two souls, there is but one, and your Paramātmán is unnecessary, it is this very soul. That One is called Paramātmán, that very One is called Jīvātmán, and so on; and you Dualists, such as the Sāṅkhyas and others, who say that the soul is *Vibhu*, omnipresent, how can you make two infinities? There can be only one. What else? This One is the one Infinite Ātman, everything else is Its manifestation. There the Buddhist stops, but there it does not end. . . . You say the universe is a thing of continuous motion. In *Vyaṣṭi* (the finite) everything is moving, you are moving, the table is moving, motion everywhere; it is

*Samsāra*, continuous motion; it is *Jagat*. Therefore there cannot be an individuality in this *Jagat*, because individuality means that which does not change; there cannot be any changeful individuality, it is a contradiction in terms. There is no such thing as individuality in this little world of ours, the *Jagat*. Thought and feeling, mind and body, men and animals and plants are in a continuous state of flux. But suppose you take the universe as a unit whole; can it change or move? Certainly not. Motion is possible in comparison with something which is a little less in motion, or entirely motionless. The universe as a whole, therefore, is motionless, unchangeable. You are, therefore, an individual then and then alone, when you are the whole of it, when the realization of 'I am the universe' comes. That is why the Vedāntist says that so long as there are two, fear does not cease. It is only when one does not see another, does not feel another, when it is all one,—then alone fear ceases, then alone death vanishes, then alone *Samsāra* vanishes. Advaita teaches us therefore that man is individual in being universal, and not in being particular. You are immortal only when you are the whole. You are fearless and deathless only when you are the universe; and then, that which you call the universe is the same as that you call God, the same that you call existence, the same that you call the whole. It is the one undivided Existence which is taken to be the manifold world which we see, as also others who are in the same state of mind as we.

Here is this universe, and even admitting that it is Brahman, can we know it? No.—'By what can the knower be known?' How can the knower be known? The eyes see everything; can they see themselves? They cannot. The very fact of knowledge is a degradation. . . . Knowledge is lower than the thing itself, because it is always a limitation. When you want to know a thing, it immediately becomes limited by your mind.—[Knowing is] gathering a thing, bringing it into consciousness, and to knowing it as a whole. This is true about all knowledge, and can it be less so about the Infinite? Can you thus limit Him who is the substance of all knowledge, Him who is the *Sākṣī*, the Witness, without whom you cannot have any knowledge, Him who has no qualities, who is the Witness of the whole universe, the Witness in our own souls? How can you know Him? By



what means can you bind Him up? Everything, the whole universe, is such a false attempt.

The knower cannot be known, because if it were known it will not be the knower. If you look at your eyes in a mirror, the reflection is no more your eyes, but something else, only a reflection. Then if this Soul, this Universal, Infinite Being which you are, is only a witness, what good is it? It cannot (some may object) live and move about, and enjoy the world, as we do. . . .

First of all, it is only the witness that can enjoy. If there is a wrestling match, who enjoys it, those who take part in it, or those who are looking on, the outsider? The more and more you are the witness of anything in life, the more you enjoy it. And this is *Ānanda*, and therefore infinite bliss can only be yours when you have become the witness of this universe, then alone you are a *Mukta Puruṣa*. It is the witness alone that can work without any desire, without any idea of going to heaven, without any idea of blame, without any idea of praise. The witness alone enjoys, and none else.

This theory of *Māyā* has been the most difficult thing to understand in all ages. Let me tell you in a few words that it is surely no theory, it is the combination of the three ideas *Deśa-kāla-nimitta*—space, time and causation—and this time and space and cause have been further reduced into *Nāma-Rūpa* (name and form). Suppose there is a wave in the ocean. The wave is distinct from the ocean only in its form and name, and this form and this name cannot have any separate existence from the wave; they exist only with the wave. The wave may subside, but the same amount of water remains, even if the name and form that were the wave vanish for ever. So this *Māyā* is what makes the difference between me and you, between all animals and man, between gods and men. In fact, it is this *Māyā* that causes the *Ātman* to be caught, as it were, in so many millions of beings, and these are distinguishable only through name and form. If you leave it alone, let name and form go, all this variety vanishes for ever, and you are what you really are. This is *Māyā*. It is again no theory, but a statement of facts.

When the realist states that this table exists, what he means is, that this table has an independent existence of its own, that it does not depend on the existence of anything else in the

universe, and if this whole universe be destroyed and annihilated this table will remain just as it is now. A little thought will show you that it cannot be so. Everything here in the sense-world is dependent and interdependent, relative and co-relative, the existence of one depending on the other. There are three steps, therefore, in our knowledge of things; the first is, that each thing is individual, and separate from every other; and the next step is to find that there is a relation and co-relation between all things; and the third is that there is only one thing which we see as many. The first idea of God with the ignorant is that this God is somewhere outside the universe, that is to say, the conception of God is extremely human; He does just what a man does, only on a bigger and higher scale. And we have seen how that idea of God is proved in a few words to be unreasonable and insufficient. And the next idea is the idea of a power we see manifested everywhere. This is the real Personal God we get in the *Caṇḍī*, but, mark me, not a God that you make the reservoir of all good qualities only. You cannot have two Gods, God and Satan; you must have only one, and dare to call Him good and bad, have only one, and take the logical consequences. . . . This is the second stage; and the third is that God is neither outside nature nor inside nature, but God and nature and soul and universe are all convertible terms. You never see two things; it is your metaphysical words that have deluded you. . . . You see the effect and the effect alone, and the cause you cannot see, and the moment you can see the cause the effect will have vanished. Where is this world then, and who has taken it off?—This Brahman, this Reality is unknown and unknowable, not in the sense of the agnostic, but because to know Him would be a blasphemy, because you are He already. We have also seen that this Brahman is not this table and yet is this table. Take off the name and form, and whatever is reality is He. He is the reality in everything.

As step by step science is progressing it has taken the explanation of natural phenomena out of the hands of spirits and angels. Because Advaita has done likewise in spiritual matters, it is the most scientific religion. This universe has not been created by any extra-cosmic God, nor is it the work of any outside genius. It is self-creating, self-dissolving, self-manifesting, One Infinite Existence, the Brahman. *Tattvamasi Svetaketo*—‘That Thou



art, O Śvetaketu!' Thus you see that this, and this alone, and none else, can be the only scientific religion.

## 2

## THE WORLD IS MY IDEA

SWAMI RAMA TIRTHA<sup>1</sup>

Vedānta looks upon the world as My idea, as My creation, but even when Vedānta looks upon the world as My idea or My creation, you cannot call Vedānta Idealism. . . . People in Europe and America think that Vedānta is a kind of Idealism. . . . But these people have not understood it.—The Idealists make the world depend upon the little subject, the little understanding, the little mind, but when Vedānta says that the world is My Idea, that does not mean that the world is the idea of the little subject, the little understanding, the little mind. This is something variable, this is something in itself a creation, and Berkeley made a terrible blunder when he said that dreams are the creations of the subject of the dreamland to be identical with the subject of the wakeful state. . . . The subject in the dreamland is a thing of the same sort as the objects in the dreamland are. When you wake up, the subject of the wakeful state is of the same sort as the objects of that state; and so Berkeley took the subject of the wakeful state to be the same as the subject of dreamland. The world is not a creation of the subject of the wakeful state or the subject of the dreamland; the world is a creation of My Self, the Real God, the Real Ātman.

Vedānta says to the Idealists, 'You are right in saying that all the names and forms of this world could not come about without the action of the subject; all the qualities, attributes and properties of things depend upon the activity and action of the understanding or mind, or the subject. You are right in so far; but you are not right in saying that there is nothing outside this small subject of yours, that there is nothing outside this small mind of yours.' Vedānta says to the Realists, 'You

<sup>1</sup> Swami Rama Tirtha, *In the Woods of God-Realization*, Vol. VI, pp. 15-18, 20-25, 27-8, 30, 33-4, 104-5, 35.

are right in saying that this phenomenal world could not appear with the sole action of any outside reality'. You know, the Realists say, that this phenomenal world is due to some action upon our senses from outside. The objects act upon the senses, and thus we perceive things. Vedānta says, 'Yes, without some sort of action from outside we could not perceive things'. So far is Realism right, but according to Vedānta, Realism is wrong when it says that all our perception is due solely and wholly to outside action and not to the subject's activity.

Why was the action of the subject excited? What excited the action of the subject? . . . There must be something outside, which acted upon the subject and excited a reaction or action of the subject, and when the reaction of the subject was excited, there were these qualities posited, deposed, put forth or projected there. We cannot say that, before this subject acted, these qualities themselves acted upon the mind and excited an action or reaction of the mind; we cannot say that, because qualities make their appearance after the action or reaction of the mind; so there must be something outside. . . . And when this reality acts upon the senses of a man, they report it to his mind and the mind reacts; then are the attributes or qualities of the object projected on the scene. . . . Thus action and reaction from both sides bring about the phenomenon.

According to Vedānta, in your intellect the Thing-in-itself is present, what we call the Ātman. The Real Self is living in your intellect, there is the Thing-in-itself or the Reality in every object in this world. . . . The Reality outside, the Divinity or the Absolute . . . and the Absolute in the intellect are like the two hands, as it were. The moment they collide . . . they make their appearance like foam. [Just as when] one wave from one side, another from the other side [collide] foam is produced, these qualities are produced. . . . The very moment the *draṣṭā* (the seer) and the *dṛśya* (the seen) unite, we see the objects.

When the Idealists say that all this world is created by the action of the subject, they ignore the fact that this action could not take place without there being a reaction from somewhere. And so the Realists are right when they say that this world has a reality in itself. . . . But when they say that the phenomena of this world are real by themselves and stand by themselves, they are wrong, because the phenomena of this world, the



differences of this world, the qualities of the objects of this world, all these qualities and phenomena depend just as much upon the action of the subject as upon the reaction of the Reality in the object.

Here comes in a great objection. . . . How can there be action and reaction in Infinity? Well, we spoke of action and reaction only to be understood in order to use the same language as other people use. . . . Action and reaction take place not in reality in the Ātman, but they take place in the Ātman as defined by the 'limited'. Look here. Here is one wave of water coming from one side, another from the other side. One wave is water just as much as the other, and even when the waves collide, both will remain water, they do not undergo a change, and yet the action and reaction take place between the waves. Here is water as defined by the wave coming in contact, [into] collision with water as defined by another wave, and this collision brings about the phenomenon of foam. Similarly, Absolute Reality as defined by the intellect, when it comes into collision with the Absolute Reality as defined by the object, there we see the phenomena of attributes, properties and qualities of this world.

The Absolute Reality is the same in the intellect as in the object. . . . To what then are differences due? . . . All differences in this world are due only to qualities. . . . The phenomenal world consists of these qualities, and they depend upon the Absolute Reality. . . . According to these qualities, the Absolute Reality has a quality too, namely, the quality of supporting them, the quality of keeping them up. . . . If so, the Absolute Reality is not absolute, because the Absolute Reality has at least one quality of supporting all these qualities. How then can we say that such a Reality is absolute? We say this from direct experience. Just as you say that this world is real on the authority of your personal experience; so, on the authority of the higher personal experience, on the authority of the supreme personal experience, we say that when the Absolute Reality is realized, all these qualities, all this time and space vanish. Thus from the standpoint of the Absolute Reality, these qualities never existed, but from the standpoint of the qualities, these depend upon the *Adhiṣṭhāna*, the Absolute. . . . It is called the problem of Māyā.

These are not mere subjects of speculation. . . . Vedānta says whether or not I am able to tell you why this Māyā or ignorance is, it remains a fact. . . . The Vedāntic attitude is merely experimental and scientific. It establishes no hypothesis, it puts forth no theory. It does not claim to be able to explain the origin of the world; this is beyond the sphere of intellect or comprehension. That is the position of Vedānta. This is called Māyā. . . . You are the absolute Reality, in which all this world, all the phenomena of the universe are mere waves or eddies. Realize that, and become free, absolutely free.

## 3

## AWARENESS OF THE ABSOLUTE

RAMANA MAHARSHI<sup>1</sup>

Since the world is perceived, the existence of a common cause with infinite powers of manifestation should be admitted by all. The pictures with diverse names and forms, their worker-on, their background and their illumining agency—all these are but the Self.—The world, the individual and God: the one [Supreme Reality] is cleft into these three.—Therefore, to transcend the ego and inhere as the self alone is the Highest State of Being.—The universe is but the object of the five senses. The one mind operating through the five senses, perceives the universe. The universe is therefore no other than the mind.—Although the world and the perception thereof rise and sink together, the world is only the object of perception. Where they rise from and sink in, is yet the core free from manifestation and extinctions. That is always *aware* and all perfect.—Worship is barely the beacon for the sensing of the all-perfect PRESENCE transcending name and form, [whereas] becoming aware of the conscious self, as sublimated into the immaculate Presence, reaching the state of Beatific Peace and merging into that (Absolute Consciousness) shall alone be perfect Realization.—The dyads (i.e. birth and death, light and darkness, subject and object), the triads (e.g., cognizer cognition, and the object cognized), and the like always rest on a single basic reality. . . .

<sup>1</sup> Ramana Maharshi, *Truth Revealed*, pp. 11, 13-19, 22-3, 25, 27-8.



Knowledge and ignorance perish in the awareness of the Self, their own substratum.—The conscious self is self-effulgent, is all alone without a second to be known or to be revealed. Know it to be the supreme knowledge but not blank nescience.—The Self being the Absolute consciousness is alone real. Knowledge of diverse objects is ignorance. Even such false (relative) knowledge is no other than Self—the real (Absolute) knowledge. The different ornaments of gold are not real (in their diversity): Can they remain apart from substance, gold?—The past and the future are only with reference to the present. They too are present in their own time, hence the present alone is the fundamental Truth.—Since we are the same now, then and for ever, here, there and everywhere—our pure selves evidently beyond time and space do alone exist.—The world is real both for the wise and for the ignorant. For the latter the world is the whole reality; whereas for the former the reality forms the imponderable substratum materialising as the world. That is all the difference between the two.—The disputations on the relative merits of free-will and destiny are compatible with the ignorance of this root-cause. Those who are aware of the Self—the universal root-cause,—have transcended them.—Vision of God as other than the seeing Self is a mere mental hallucination. He who has first lost his ego and found his own root—the seeing Self—is said to have found God! Because God is no other self.—

The method of investigation is . . . to quest the source wherefrom the 'I'—thought arises.—Questing into the mind along the trail of 'who am I?' and reaching the Heart, the ego will topple over and simultaneously one 'I—I' will spontaneously show itself. Even so, its significance is not the ego. Being in Perfection is what it is.—What more is there to achieve or to fulfil for the beatific sages who stand self-realized after extinguishing their egos? They are not aware of anything as other than the Self.—True accomplishment is to realize the eternal immanent Self and remain as that.—Enquiring 'who is the doer?' and realizing the Self, the sense of doership is extinguished simultaneously with the three kinds of actions. Such is the state of eternal liberation.—The ideas of bondage and liberation endure so long as one considers himself bound. On investigation of the question 'Who is the bound one?' and realizing the Self—the eternally Free Self being found alone and the sense of bondage

being lost, would the sense of Emancipation survive?—The ego perishing,—Salvation is found. Realize it yourself.

## 4

## THE SUPREME AS BEING AND FREEDOM

S. RADHAKRISHNAN<sup>1</sup>

Philosophy is an essential aid to life. We are planted in a world where we are required to think and reflect on the nature of the cosmos, the meaning of right and wrong, the destiny of the human individual. It is a law of man's intellectual consciousness to search for the truth of things and strive to live in the spirit of truth. . . . Philosophy changes with the change of historical perspective. Today we must integrate the new discoveries with our philosophical conceptions. The test of life is the capacity to respond to challenges. . . . Philosophy should base itself on positive knowledge of actuality and not speculative idealism, on facts of outward nature, facts of the individual mind and facts of spiritual life, of what is without us, of what is within us, of what is above us.

Philosophy is not a mere factual exposition of scientifically ascertained facts. It is not a list of propositions which are treated as meaningful because they can be sensibly verified. In metaphysical interpretation as in scientific interpretation we have to study facts and by intellectual imagination, by speculative insight, reach principles which are no *a priori* but are inferences of reflection on experience. . . . Philosophy is sustained effort at interpretation by the hypothetical method. It is as empirical in its method as any other science, though like history its data cannot be studied objectively from the outside. We can study any subject in a scientific manner though the central concepts in each case may vary with the nature of the subject. The orderliness and the growth in values, the transitions from matter to life, from life to animal instinct, from animal cunning to human self-consciousness, from human self-consciousness to

<sup>1</sup> S. Radhakrishnan, in *History of Philosophy, Eastern and Western*, Vol. II, pp. 439-40, 442-3, 446-7.



spiritual wisdom illustrate the incorporation of fresh ideas and values in the cosmic process.

The world is not self-sufficient. It depends on something which lies beyond it and cannot be known in the way in which it is known. The seeker's scientific conscience brings him to the frontiers which he cannot pass but takes him to another order of experience. The real is not to be reduced to the material. The wonders of science are many but nothing is more wonderful than the mind of man which has unravelled the secrets of nature. If science tells us anything it is the power of mind over matter, the mind which exerts the whole energy of its varied being. . . . The subject is to the object as *puruṣa* is to *prakṛti*, as spirit to matter, as freedom to necessity. If we are conscious of necessity, if we discriminate the self from the world of necessity we attain to our true status as free beings. The Supreme is not an intellectual idea but a living reality. We are made aware of the Beyond, the Transcendent. Why is the world what it is and not any other? This relates to Being as Freedom. A scientific study of the facts of nature takes us beyond the facts to the transcendent Being which is also Freedom. . . . If we emphasize only the Being aspect we tend to make it abstract, when it remains a negative principle opposed to the world, to its multiplicity and plenitude. God as absolute transcendence is an idea in which everything vanishes. Transcendence itself will be reduced to nothingness. It will become empty freedom if it does not give itself out. The cosmic universality is that which gives meaning to transcendence.

Human life enlightened is spirit, the voice of life, of truth and of beauty.<sup>1</sup> When rational thought is applied to the empirical data of the world and of the human self, the consciousness of a Supreme who is Pure Being and Perfect Freedom is reached; but it may be argued that it is only a necessity of thought, a hypothesis however valid it may be. But there is an ancient and widespread tradition that we can apprehend the Eternal Being

<sup>1</sup> Cp. 'The Spirit in us is life'. 'God is spirit—Spirit is life, not thing, not energy, not immobility, something in itself and by itself.' 'Those who share the experience do not seek for proofs for the existence of spirit.—The rationality of faith requires to be demonstrated.—The famous arguments for the existence of God—show the inadequacy of naturalistic explanations. Nature is not its own *raison d'être*. No part of it contains its own explanation.' (Radhakrishnan, in *Contemporary Indian Philosophy*, pp. 503, 492, 494-5.)—Ed.

with directness and immediacy. When the Upaniṣads speak of *jñāna* or gnosis, when the Buddha speaks of *bodhi* or enlightenment, when Jesus speaks of the truth that will make us free, they refer to the mode of direct spiritual apprehension of the Supreme in which the gap between knowledge and being is closed. . . . The experience is not of a subjective psychic condition. The human individual strips himself one after the other of the outer sheaths of consciousness, penetrates to the nerve and quick of his life until all else fades away into illimitable darkness, until he is alone in the white radiance of a central and unique ecstasy. This is the fulfilment of man. This is to be with God. This is to be of God.

Attempts to rationalize the mystery, to translate into the language of concepts that which is inexpressible in concepts have resulted in different versions. They all take their source in the aspiration of man towards an unseen world though the forms in which this aspiration is couched are determined by the environment and climate of thought. The historical statements of faith should not be confused with the inner meaning of religious life itself. This is the teaching not only of the Upaniṣads and of Buddhism but also of the Greek systems and Platonism, of Islam and of the Gospels and the Schools of Gnosticism. This is the perennial philosophy, the *sanātana-dharma* of which Plotinus said: 'This doctrine is not new; it was professed from the most ancient times though without being developed explicitly; we wish only to be interpreters of the ancient sages, and to show by the evidence of Plato himself that they had the same opinions as ourselves.' This is the truth expressed in the Koranic verse: 'Mankind were one community, and Allah sent [unto them diverse] Prophets as bearers of good tidings and as warners. . . . And those unto whom (the Scripture) was given differed concerning it, (even) after clear proofs had come unto them, only through (prejudice and) hatred of one another.' And again, 'Lo (Muhammad)! We inspire thee as We inspired Noah and the prophets after him, as We inspired Abraham and Ismail and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes, and Jesus and Job and Jonah and Aaron and Solomon, and as We imparted unto David the Psalms; And (as We revealed the Truth unto) messengers We have mentioned unto thee before and messengers We have not mentioned unto thee'. This is the



religion which Augustine mentions in his well-known statement: 'That which is called the Christian Religion existed among the Ancients and ever did exist from the beginning of the human race until Christ came in the flesh at which time the true religion, which already existed, began to be called "Christianity".' We must now get back to this fundamental wisdom which has been obscured and distorted in the course of history by dogmatic and sectarian developments. We must get back to the primal sources which are not necessarily what was in the beginning but what is eternally present.

The basic principle of all democracy is implicit in the famous text: That art thou, *tat tvam asi*. All men are not equal in regard to their psychological aptitudes and talents. The essential equality of men lies in the depths of spirit where the road is open to each man for fulfilling his destiny. The text affirms the equality of value of each person as a free spirit. This equality forbids that any man should be treated only as a means and not at the same time as an end in himself. This equality entails a social order in which there are equal opportunities for all members, for education and work, for health and cultural development.

## 5

THE INWARD APPROACH AND THE  
INNER SELFT. M. P. MAHADEVAN<sup>1</sup>

One might think that questions relating to the inner life would be the especial domain of the philosopher, that he is not afraid of being alone, that the things with which he deals are the imponderables, beyond the reach of the senses. But actually, if we scan the pages of the history of philosophy, we shall find that the art of 'turning the eye inward' is rare even among the philosophers. Their usual task seems to be one of enumeration and classification of things, rather than of experiencing the

<sup>1</sup> Presidential Address, Indian Philosophical Congress, 30th Session. Abridged and edited.

inward nature of reality. One may not be surprised at the fact that 'quantity' reigns in the kingdom of the physical sciences. But what is amazing is that there is the 'reign of quantity' in Sophia's Heaven too. One of the favourite games of the philosophers, therefore, has been to derive the many from the one, or the one from the many, to divide a block-universe into a number of pieces, as it were and to put them back into a whole. The ontologies and cosmologies of many philosophers would seem to be but rules devised for playing this game. The dominant role of the 'categories' in philosophy's history only goes to show the tyranny of the 'externalist' attitude even over metaphysics.

It is not true to say that philosophy in its earlier phases is 'externalist', and turns more and more 'inward' in its later stages. There is no such 'evolution'—or should we say 'involution'—of philosophy.—In India too the course of philosophy has not lain in any progressive turning of the philosophical outlook from the 'outward' to the 'inward'. Although, comparatively speaking, it is the inward approach that is favoured in Indian philosophy, the champions of the rival method have not been wanting in any period of India's philosophic history.

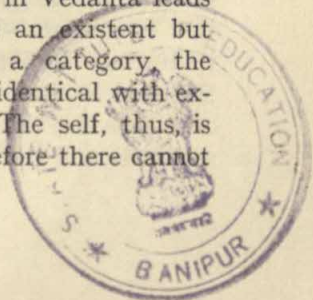
The pass to which the 'externalist' attitude has led philosophy may be clearly seen in one of the trends in contemporary thought which at first called itself logical positivism, but which now bears a less immodest name, 'logical empiricism'.—In recent years logical empiricists have been devoting their time and energy to attempts at reducing the language of all science, by analysis and formalization, into a common language which may be styled physical language. . . . The worship of science and the so-called empirical facts could go no further. Philosophy used to be regarded as the 'Queen of the Sciences' (*Regina Scientiarum*). Logical positivism has made of her their servile maid (*Magd der Wissenschaften*) even as in the Middle Ages she had been the handmaid of theology (*ancilla theologiae*).

Science obviously counts for much. But to hold that science is all is clearly a superstition. It is against a philosophy led by science that a recent philosophical trend in the Continent of Europe, existentialism, has raised its voice of protest. Existentialism is a movement and a mood, and not a precise system. It is one of the ways in which the philosophic spirit has sought to meet the contemporary crisis, which is the crisis of man. Man,



the miracle-worker in the realm of science, has forgotten himself. He has suffered self-loss in the wonder-machines he has created. Not only does he not know his identity, but also he has mistaken himself for a natural specimen or a 'thing' of the world. . . . It is from such a gloom that existentialism seeks to save man.—The existentialists take man as the central theme of philosophy; and by man they mean the free, self-creating, self-transcending subject. They would not endorse any system of thought which whittles down the importance of man, and reduces him to an item in the physical world and ignores his inner life and destiny.—To live as an object in the world is inauthentic existence. . . . It is only when the individual being exists as he really is, accepting his finiteness and all that it implies, anticipating death and freely welcoming it that there is for him authentic existence. It is not peaceful existence, for where there is peace, there is no adventure, and where there is no adventure, there is no authentic human reality. The presence of others, the existentialists would say, is the death of me. . . . Thus, human existence is a vain existence, full of misery and supporting a miserable consciousness, which is an absolute deception and fraud.—Man has to live dangerously every moment; hence his anguish, dread, and care (*Sorge*). Madness and frenzy overtake him, and he despairs at the absurdity and nothingness of it all. Despair pursues man right to the grave.

The very depressing picture of man presented by the existentialists is due to the fact that in spite of their call to philosophy to go 'inward', they themselves do not go inward enough. In their inward journey they meet with the ghost of the self and imagine that that is the self; they mistake the shadow of man for man. They rightly recognize the inadequacy of the categorical method, the method of counting and classifying. But unfortunately they fall a prey to this very method when they maintain that the self is an existent particular among other existent particulars, and separate man from himself and the world. The method of self-analysis followed in Vedānta leads to quite a different result. The self is not an existent but *existence*—existence not in the sense of a category, the Naiyāyika *sattā* or *summum genus*, but as identical with experience. *Sat* [being] is *cit* [consciousness]. The self, thus, is pure being and plenary awareness, and therefore there cannot



be any want or unhappiness in and for it. So, it is referred to as *ānanda* (bliss). . . . It is only when we pierce through the apparent man that we shall arrive at the free man of spirit. Describing the ideal of the free and full man—the plenary spirit—the *Bhagavadgītā* declares: 'He whom all desires enter as the waters enter the all-filling and stable sea, attains peace; not so the desirer of desires' (II, 70). Such a man has no dread of death, for there is no death for him.

The existentialist views everything *sub specie mortis*. Death is not an event which is to occur in the future, and about which one need not worry at present. According to Heidegger, man has to think it every moment, so as to prepare himself for it. Contrast with this existentialist attitude to death of Vedāntic technique, as is illustrated in the experience of Ramana Maharshi. As a lad, he was seized one day with the fear of death, quite unreasonably. Instead of cowering before it, he dramatized death and worked out the consequences through a process of self-analysis. And the great discovery dawned upon him that the self is unsmitten by death, that he is the deathless self. Recalling this experience long afterwards, for the benefit of spiritual aspirants, Śrī Ramana says: 'The "I" or my "Self" was holding the focus of attention by a powerful fascination, from that time onwards. Fear of death had vanished at once and for ever. Absorption in the self has continued from that moment right up to this time. Other thoughts may come and go like the various notes of a piece of music, but the "I" continues like the śrīti or the unvarying basic or fundamental note which accompanies and blends with all other notes.'

Perhaps it is too much to expect of a mood, which is existentialism, notwithstanding its phenomenological basis, to penetrate deeper into the heart of reality. It only reflects the abnormal age of crisis which has occasioned it. We can only describe it, adopting the language of the poet Hölderlin and the existentialist Heidegger, as lying under a double negation, the no-more of the gods that have fled and the not-yet of the god that is coming.—The importance of existentialism consists in its turning the attention of man on himself, and in its realizing the need for inwardness. Before understanding the revelations of science and the meaning of history, we have got to know the scientists and the historian first. The mystery of man has to be



grappled with even before attempting to understand what understanding is. . . . But the sciences of man are mainly concerned with his exterior features, and not with his inner reality. Man appears to these sciences as a body, mind, behaviour, member of a tribe, citizen of a state, wage-earner, etc. No doubt these studies are useful. But if no attempt is made to enter into man and see him from within, one cannot get at the true nature of man. Man would then continue to remain as a mere means, and not be treated as the end that he really is.

The empirical man's structure is such that he goes out more easily than he can turn within. One of the Upaniṣadic texts explains this outgoing tendency as the result of the outward-looking nature of the sense-organs. But the philosopher—the seeker after wisdom—has to struggle against the current, and turn the eye within. It is only the man with the inward-turned eye (*āvṛtta-cakṣuḥ*) that will gain the goal. As Śāṅkara remarks, he who, on the contrary, has an outward look, and is moved by desire and aversion will not realise the self, the supreme reality and the ultimate end of life.

That even science will benefit by cultivating the inward look, besides the usual laboratory methods, may be seen in the work of Trigant Burrow and his associates, of the Lifwyn Foundation in America, in the discipline called by them phylobiology or phylopathology.—What is important for us to note is that the phylobiologist has adopted the method of internal approach in the study of his problem. In this inclusive approach, says Burrow, it is required that the student of human behaviour become an *internal experimentalist*. Objective implements, etc., are admitted to be but secondary.—It is by such technique of internal analysis that the phylobiologists have discovered the unity of man and the unity of the world. They plead for a new science of man which will recognize the biological identity of individual and *phylum* [social organism] and deal with the organism of man not as a divisible phenomenon, but as a dynamic whole. Their creed is expressed in the affirmation: it is the nature of the organism of man that it is one, not many; and it is likewise the nature of the world surrounding man's organism that it is one, and not many.

The unity that is achieved by phylobiology at the level of physiology is accomplished at a higher level by para-

psychology in the realm of mind. Much of the present-day psychology ignores the mind, not to speak of the soul, and is concerned with man as a physiological being. For it, there is no mind apart from the brain; and its focus is on the dynamics of the brain. It is as against this cerebrocentricism that parapsychologists are endeavouring to demonstrate the reality of the extraphysical mind through controlled experiments in their laboratories.—The value of parapsychology to philosophy is that it has shown the absurdity of epi-phenomenalism. Also, it has broken the body-mind dualism.—Parapsychology has done a great service to man by revealing to him certain reaches of his own mind which normally he does not even dream of. It has taught him that he is more than his body, and that there is not any unbridgeable gulf between his mind and the so-called objective world.

I have discussed phylobiology and parapsychology in order to show that the adoption of the inward approach in the study of man is in no way inimical to the spirit of science. The *phylum* of the phylobiologist would seem to correspond, roughly, to the *Virāt-puruṣa* (Cosmic Person) of Vedānta, and the Mind of the parapsychologist to the *kāraṇa-citta* (Cause-Mind) of the Yogin, and, in certain respects, the *Hiraṇyagarbha* (the Golden Germ) of the Vedāntin. The Vedānta, however, pursues the inward path still further and discovers the World-Soul (*Avyākṛta*), as the basis of all, and, as the total reality, the Transcendent Self (*Turīya-Ātman*). But before following this path, let us make clear to ourselves the meaning of the expression 'inward' or 'interior'.

Inwardness does not mean introspection in the sense of making the mind inspect its own contents. It is not the attitude of the introvert as against that of the extrovert. The man who surveys the mind is no nearer the truth than the one who splits the atom or the one who scans the starry heavens. It is true that, comparatively speaking, the procedure of looking at one's own psychical phenomena is inward, while the observation of the exposed brain of another at work is outward. Yet one cannot go inward enough even in introspectional psychology. And, there is also the danger of being shipwrecked on the shores of subjectivism, if one's exclusive concern is his own ego. Ego-centrism is not true inwardness; for the ego is outer to the ultimate reality which is the Spirit or Self.



The true Self is not a mere subject set over against an object. It is the ground of both subject and object. There is a point-to-point correspondence, one may say, between the microcosm and the macrocosm. It is the same Self that appears as the individual and as the world. In order to make us realize this truth, the Upaniṣads declare that there is non-difference between the individual and cosmic form of the Self at each level of experience, and in each phase of existence. An Upaniṣadic seer identifies the principle that is within the human person with the deity within the solar orb thus: 'This one who is in man, and that one who is in the sun, He is one'. Here it is shown that space is no barrier to the unity of Spirit. Another seer, Vāmadeva by name, crosses both time and space, and declares: 'I was Manu, and the sun too'. In the *Māndūkya*, the self in the state of deep sleep (*prājña*) is described as the lord of all beings (*sarveśvara*), the origin and end of all things. In other words, the seed-self that is patent in sleep-experience is identified with the unmanifest root of the world (*Avyākṛta*). Transcending even this is the *Turīya*, the non-dual reality. It is this supreme truth that is taught by Uddālaka in the text 'That thou art'. Here, the equation is struck between the ground of the world, Brahman, and the soul of the individual, Ātman. In fact, the term Ātman in the Upaniṣads is applied to denote not only the soul but also the basic reality of the universe. It is thus that the Upaniṣads speak of the Ātman of natural phenomena such as lightning (*vidyut*) and fire (*tejas*). In the debate held at King Janaka's court, as reported in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, one of the questioners of Yājñavalkya asks the sage to explain to him 'that which is the direct and immediate Brahman, that which is the Soul in all things'. The inwardness of the Ātman to all beings is expressed also in the phrase 'that on which all this world is woven, warp, and woof' employed in the same debate by the sagely woman, Gārgī.

The technique by which the 'inner' Self is to be realized is the method of 'inward' search. It consists in piercing through the outer encrustations into the heart of things. The advance is from the outer to the inner, from the gross to the subtle. Neither sense nor mere understanding can take us to the core of things. The path that leads to the Spirit is referred to as intuition, for lack of a better term. The term for intuition that is

employed in India is yoga. The technique of mind-control which is associated with the name of Patanjali is only one aspect of yoga. There are other aspects such as karma-yoga and bhakti-yoga, the way of works and the discipline of devotion. The sovereign yoga, according to Advaita-Vedānta, is jñāna, the path of intuitive knowledge. The one common characteristic of all yoga is inwardness. It is spoken of as the look-within (*antardṛṣṭih*).

The culmination of inwardness is in Advaita-experience. As Sureśvara, one of the most eminent of Śankara's disciples, points out, while explaining the meaning of the prefix *upa-* in the term *upa-ni-śad*, there is nothing nearer or more inward than the non-dual spirit. The realization of this truth is the plenitude of spirituality. It is a realization that is not in time, though it takes time to realize it. The non-dual experience is one's own natural, eternal state. The soul in bondage, the empirical self, is oblivious of it on account of nescience (*avidyā*). When the veil of ignorance is lifted, the absolute Spirit stands self-revealed. How the self-luminous reality came to be veiled in ignorance, we from the side of relativity can never explain. That is why it is called *māyā*. From the side of the Absolute there never was ignorance. It is the realization of this truth that is called *mokṣa* or release. One does not have this realization through mere theoretical reasoning. Tons of theory will not be capable of destroying the darkness of ignorance. What is needed for the purpose is the light of intuitive wisdom, which is *jñāna*.



## E

### ISLAMIC THOUGHT

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#### I

#### ISLAM AND SCIENCE

SYED AHMAD KHAN<sup>1</sup>

There are so many natural mysteries in the universe which are beyond the understanding of men that they cannot be counted. . . . These mysteries which we watch every day no longer strike us as miraculous and we become indifferent to them, but when man begins to believe in some religion or considers a person holy he always attributes miracles to them. He may accept any miracle which is attributed to them; indeed he does not accept the truth of a religion or the holiness of a person without those miracles. . . . The prophet of God (Muhammad) reiterated again and again: 'I am a man like you. it has been revealed to me that your Lord is the one God', but people were not content with this, and ascribed miracles to him. They base their faith in the prophet upon these miracles.—The same attitude is adopted towards the saints; until it is accepted that they performed miracles . . . people do not find it possible to believe that they were saints.—This is why men have interpolated supernatural factors into Islam, which are not worthy of belief, but such credulous persons believe in them. However, this is a grievous mistake. Any religion which is true or claims to be true cannot contain such elements in it as are contrary to nature and offend human reason, so that a sensible person would find it impossible to believe in them. A true faith in its pristine purity is absolutely free from such supernatural and irrational elements. It is always at a later time that those who hanker for the supernatural interpolate into it supernatural and miraculous elements. I am sincerely convinced about

<sup>1</sup> Syed Ahmad Khan in *Sources of Indian Tradition* (ed. Wm. T. de Bary and others), pp. 743-4, 746.

Islam that it is absolutely free from such strange stories and unnatural and irrational mysteries.

The Koran does not prove that the earth is stationary, nor does it prove that the earth is in motion. Similarly it can not be proved from the Koran that the sun is in motion, nor can it be proved from it that the sun is stationary. The Holy Koran was not concerned with these questions of astronomy; because the progress in human knowledge was to decide such matters itself. The Koran had a much higher and a far nobler purpose in view. It would have been tantamount to confusing the simple Bedouins by speaking to them about such matters and to throwing into perplexity even the learned, whose knowledge and experience had not yet made the necessary progress, by discussing such problems. The real purpose of a religion is to improve morality; by raising such questions that purpose would have been jeopardized. In spite of all this I am fully convinced that the Work of God and the Word of God can never be antagonistic to each other; we may, through the fault of our knowledge, sometimes make mistakes in understanding the meaning of the Word.—Islam is not irrational superstition; it is a rational religion which can march hand in hand with the growth of knowledge. Any fear to the contrary betrays lack of faith in the truth of Islam.

## 2

## ISLAMIC FAITH AND PRACTICE

SYED AMEER ALI<sup>1</sup>

*The Essence of Islam*

It is necessary to understand aright the true significance of the word Islam. *Salam* (*Salama*), in its primary sense, means to be tranquil, at rest, to have done one's duty, to have paid up, to be at perfect peace; in its secondary sense, to surrender oneself to Him with whom peace is made. The noun derived from it means peace, greeting, safety, salvation. The word does not imply, as is commonly supposed, absolute submission to God's will, but means, on the contrary, striving after righteousness.

<sup>1</sup> Syed Ameer Ali, *The Spirit of Islam*, pp. 137-8, 150, 152-3, 158, 403-9. References omitted.



The principal bases on which the Islamic system is founded are (1) a belief in the unity, immateriality, power, mercy, and supreme love of the Creator; (2) charity and brotherhood among mankind; (3) subjugation of the passions; (4) the outpouring of a grateful heart to the Giver of all good; and (5) accountability for human actions in another existence. The grand and noble conceptions expressed in the Koran of the power and love of the Deity surpass everything of their kind in any other language. The unity of God, His immateriality, His majesty, His mercy, form the constant and never ending theme of the most eloquent and soul-stirring passages. The flow of life, light, and spirituality never ceases. But throughout there is no trace of dogmatism. Appeal is made to the inner consciousness of man, to his intuitive reason alone.

The God of Islam is the All-mighty, the All-knowing, the All-just, the Lord of the worlds, the Author of the heavens and the earth, the Creator of life and death, in whose hand is dominion and irresistible power; the great, all-powerful Lord of the glorious Throne. God is the Mighty, the Strong, the Most High, the Producer, the Maker, the Fashioner, the Wise, the Just, the True, the Swift in reckoning, who knoweth every ant's weight of good and of ill that each man hath done, and who suffereth not the reward of the faithful, to perish. But the Almighty, the Allwise, is also the King, the Holy, the Peaceful, the Faithful, the Guardian over His servants, the Shelterer of the orphan, the Guide of the erring, the Deliverer from every affliction, the Friend of the bereaved, the Consoler of the afflicted; in His hand is good, and He is the generous Lord, the Gracious, the Hearer, the Near-at-Hand, the Compassionate, the Merciful, the Very-forgiving, whose love for man is more tender than that of the mother-bird for her young.—The mercy of the Almighty is one of the grandest themes of the Koran. The very name (*Ay-Rahman*) with which each chapter opens, and with which He is invoked, expresses a deep, all-penetrating conviction of that love, that divine mercy which enfolds creation.

*Ethical Ideal*

The primary aim of the new Dispensation [Islam] was to infuse or revive in the heart of humanity a living perception of truth in the common relations of life. 'The moral ideal of the new gospel', to use the phraseology of an eminent writer, 'was set in the common sense of duty and the familiar instances of love.'—'Verily, those people have now passed away; they have the reward of their deeds; and ye shall have the meed of yours; of their doings ye shall not be questioned.' 'Every soul shall bear the good and the evil for which it has laboured; and God will burden none beyond its power.' 'Blessed is he who giveth away his substance that he may become pure, and who offereth not favours to any one for the sake of recompense . . . but only as seeking the approval of his Lord the Most High.'—'They are the blest who, though longing for it themselves, bestowed their food on the poor and the orphan and the captive [saying], "We feed you for the sake of God: we seek from you neither recompense nor thanks."—"Worship God alone; be kind to kindred and servants, orphans and the poor; speak righteously to men, pray, and pay alms'.

In the Koran, animal life stands on the same footing as human life in the sight of the creator. 'There is no beast on earth', says the Koran, 'nor bird which flieth with its wings, but the same is a people like unto you—unto the Lord shall they return.' . . . These precepts of tenderness so livingly embalmed in the creed are faithfully rendered into a common duty of everyday life in the world of Islam.

*Individual Freedom and Divine Government*

One of the remarkable characteristics of the Koran is the curious, and, at first sight, inconsistent, manner in which it combines the existence of a Divine will, which not only orders all things, but which acts directly upon men and addresses itself to the springs of thought in them, with the assertion of a free agency in man and of the liberty of intellect. Not that this feature is peculiar to the Muslim scripture; the same characteristic is to be found in the Biblical records. But in the Koran the conception of human responsibility is so strongly developed that the question naturally occurs to the mind, How can these



two ideas be reconciled with each other? It seems inconsistent at first sight that man should be judged by his works, a doctrine which forms the foundation of Islamic morality, if all his actions are ruled by an all-powerful Will. The earnest faith of Muhammad in an active ever-living Principle, joined to his trust in the progress of man, supplies a key to this mystery.

In many of these [Koranic] passages by 'the decree of God' is clearly meant the law of nature. The stars and planets have each their appointed course; so has every other object in creation. The movements of the heavenly bodies, the phenomena of nature, life and death, are all governed by law. Other passages unquestionably indicate the idea of Divine agency upon human will; but they are again explained by others, in which that agency is 'conditioned' upon human will. It is to the seeker for Divine help that God renders his help; it is on the searcher of his own heart, who purifies his soul from impure longings, that God bestows grace. To the Arabian Teacher, as to his predecessors, the existence of an Almighty Power, the Fashioner of the Universe, the Ruler of His creatures, was an intense and vivid reality. The feeling of 'an assured trust' in an all-pervading, ever conscious Personality has been the motive power in the world of every age. To the weary mariner, 'sailing on life's solemn main', there is nothing more assuring, nothing that more satisfies the intense longing for a better and purer world, than the consciousness of a Power above humanity to redress wrongs, to fulfil hopes, to help the forlorn. Our belief in God springs from the very essence of Divine ordinances. They are as much laws, in the strictest sense of the word, as the laws which regulate the movements of the celestial bodies. But the will of God is not an arbitrary will; it is an educating will, to be obeyed by the scholar in his walks of learning as by the devotee in his cell.

The [Koranic] passages, however, in which human responsibility and the freedom of human will are laid down in emphatic terms define and limit the conception of absolutism. 'And whosoever gets to himself a sin, gets it solely on his own responsibility.'—Man, within the limited sphere of his existence, is absolute master of his conduct. He is responsible for his actions, and for the use or misuse of the powers with which he has been endowed. He may fall or rise, according to his own 'inclination'. There was supreme assistance for him who sought Divine help

and guidance. Is not the soul purer and better in calling to its Lord for that help which He has promised? Are not the weak strengthened, the stricken comforted—by their own appeal to the Heavenly Father for solace and strength? Such were the ideas of the Teacher of Islam with regard to Divine sovereignty and the liberty of human volition. . . . In Muhammad's mind an earnest belief in the liberty of human will was joined to a vivid trust in the personality of the heavenly Father. Hereditary depravity and natural sinfulness were emphatically denied. Every child of man was born pure and true; every departure in after-life from the path of truth and rectitude is due to education. 'Every man is born religiously constituted; it is his parents who make him afterwards a Jew, Christian, or a Sabaeen, like as ye take up the beast at its birth—do ye find upon it any mutilation, until ye yourselves mutilate it?' Infants have no positive moral character: for about those who die in early life, 'God best knows what would have been their conduct' [had they lived to maturity]. 'Every human being had two inclinations—one prompting him to good and impelling him thereto, and the other prompting him to evil and thereto impelling him; but the godly assistance is nigh, and he who asks the help of God in contending with the evil promptings of his own heart obtains it.' 'It is your own conduct which will lead you to paradise or hell, as if you had been destined there for.'

No man's conduct is the outcome of fatality, nor is he borne along by an irresistible decree to heaven or hell; on the contrary, the ultimate result is the creation of his own actions, for each individual is primarily answerable for his future destiny. 'Every moral agent is furthered to his own conduct.' Or, as it is put in another tradition: 'Every one is divinely furthered in accordance with his character'. Human conduct is by no means fortuitous; one act is the result of another; and life, destiny and character mean the connected series of incidents and actions which are related to each other, as cause and effect, by an ordained law, 'the assignment' of God. In the sermons of the Disciple we find the doctrine more fully developed. 'Weigh your own soul before the time for the weighing of your actions arrives; take count with yourself before you are called upon to account for your conduct in this existence; apply yourself



to good and pure actions, adhere to the path of truth and rectitude before the soul is pressed to leave its earthly abode; verily, if you will not guide and warn yourself, none other can direct you.'—These utterances convey no impression of predestinarianism; on the contrary, they portray a soul animated with a living faith in God, and yet full of trust in human development founded upon individual exertion springing from human volition.

## 3

## ISLAMIC IDEALISM

MUHAMMAD IQBAL<sup>1</sup>

To be a self is to be able to say 'I am'. Only that truly exists which can say 'I am'. It is the degree of the intuition of 'I-amness' that determines the place of a thing in the scale of being. We too say 'I am'. But our 'I-amness' is dependent and arises out of the distinction between the self and the not-self. The ultimate Self, in the words of the Koran, 'can afford to dispense with all the worlds'. To Him the not-self does not present itself as a confronting 'other', or else it would have to be, like our finite self, in spatial relation with the confronting 'other'. What we call Nature or the not-self is only a fleeting moment in the life of God. His 'I-amness' is independent, elemental, absolute. Of such a self it is impossible for us to form an adequate conception. As the Koran says, 'Naught' is like Him; yet 'He hears and sees'. Now a self is unthinkable without a character, i.e. a uniform mode of behaviour. Nature, as we have seen, is not a mass of pure materiality occupying a void. It is a structure of events, a systematic mode of behaviour, and as such organic to the ultimate Self. Nature is to the Divine Self as character is to the human self. In the picturesque phrase of the Koran it is the habitat of Allah. From the human point of view it is an interpretation which, in our present situation, we put on the creative activity of the Absolute Ego. At a particular moment in its forward movement it is finite; but

<sup>1</sup> Muhammad Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, pp 57-8, 72-3, 77-8, 88-9, 106, 117-18.

since the self to which it is organic is creative, it is liable to increase, and is consequently boundless in the sense that no limit to its extension is final. Its boundlessness is potential, not actual. Nature, then, must be understood as a living, ever-growing organism whose growth has no final external limits. Its only limit is internal, i.e. the immanent self which animates and sustains the whole. As the Koran says: 'And verily unto thy Lord is the limit' (53: 14). Thus the view that we have taken gives a fresh spiritual meaning to physical science. The knowledge of Nature is the knowledge of God's behaviour. In our observation of Nature we are virtually seeking a kind of intimacy with the Absolute Ego; and this is only another form of worship.

Reality is, therefore, essentially spirit. But, of course, there are degrees of spirit. . . . I have conceived the Ultimate Reality as an Ego; and I must add now that from the Ultimate Ego only egos proceed. The creative energy of the Ultimate Ego, in whom deed and thought are identical, functions as ego-unities. The world, in all its details, from the mechanical movement of what we call the atom of matter to the free movement of thought in the human ego, is the self-revelation of the 'Great I am'. Every atom of Divine energy, however low in the scale of existence, is an ego. But there are degrees in the expression of egohood. Throughout the entire gamut of being runs the gradually rising note of egohood until it reaches its perfection in man. That is why the Koran declares the Ultimate Ego to be nearer to man than his own neck-vein. Like pearls do we live and move and have our being in the perpetual flow of Divine life.

I suppose you remember the distinction that I drew in the two aspects of the self, appreciative and efficient. The appreciative self lives in pure duration, i.e. change without succession. The life of the self consists in its movement from appreciation to efficiency, from intuition to intellect, and atomic time is born out of this movement. Thus the character of our conscious experience—our point of departure in all knowledge—gives us a clue to the concept which reconciles the opposition of permanence and change, of time regarded as atomic. If then we accept the guidance of our conscious experience, and conceive the life of the all inclusive Ego on the analogy of the finite ego, the time of the Ultimate Ego is revealed as change without succession,



i.e. an organic whole which appears atomic because of the creative movement of the ego. This is what Mir Damad and Mulla Baqir mean when they say that time is born with the act of creation by which the Ultimate Ego realizes and measures, so to speak, the infinite wealth of His own undetermined creative possibilities. On the one hand, therefore, the ego lives in eternity, by which term I mean non-successional change; on the other, it lives in serial time, which I conceive as organically related to eternity in the sense that it is a measure of non-successional change. In this sense alone it is possible to understand the Koranic verse: 'To God belongs the alternation of day and night.'

To live is to possess a definite outline, a concrete individuality. It is in the concrete individuality, manifested in the countless varieties of living forms that the Ultimate Ego reveals the infinite wealth of His Being. Yet the emergence and multiplication of individualities, each fixing its gaze on the revelation of its own possibilities and seeking its own dominion, inevitably brings in its wake the awful struggle of ages. 'Descend ye as enemies of one another', says the Koran. This mutual conflict of opposing individualities is the world-pain which both illuminates and darkens the temporal career of life. In the case of man in whom individuality deepens into personality, opening up possibilities of wrong doing, the sense of the tragedy of life becomes much more acute. But the acceptance of self-hood as a form of life involves the acceptance of all the imperfections that flow from the finitude of self-hood. The Koran represents man as having accepted at his peril the trust of personality which the Heavens, the earth, and the mountains refused to bear: 'Verily We proposed to the Heavens and to the earth and to the mountains to receive the "trust", but they refused the burden and they feared to receive it. Man undertook to bear it, but hath proved unjust, senseless!' (33: 72). Shall we, then, say no or yes to the trust of personality with all its attendant ills? True manhood, according to the Koran, consists in 'patience under ills and hardships'. At the present stage of the evolution of self-hood, however, we cannot understand the full import of the discipline which the driving power of pain brings. Perhaps it hardens the self against a possible dissolution. But in asking the above question we are passing the boundaries of pure

thought. This is the point where faith in the eventual triumph of goodness emerges as a religious doctrine. 'God is equal to His purpose, but most men know it not' (12: 21).

What then is matter? A colony of egos of a low order out of which emerges the ego of a higher order, when their association and interaction reach a certain degree of co-ordination. It is the world reaching the point of self-guidance wherein the ultimate Reality, perhaps, reveals its secret, and furnishes a clue to its ultimate nature. The fact that the higher emerges out of the lower does not rob the higher of its worth and dignity. It is not the origin of a thing that matters, it is the capacity, the significance, and the final reach of the emergent that matters. . . . Nor is there such a thing as a purely physical level in the sense of possessing a materiality, elementally incapable of evolving the creative synthesis we call life and mind, and needing a transcendental Deity to impregnate it with the sentient and the mental. The Ultimate Ego that makes the emergent emerge is immanent in nature, and is described by the Koran as 'the First and Last, the visible and the invisible.'

The Koran does not contemplate complete liberation from finitude as the highest state of human bliss. The 'unceasing reward' of man consists in his gradual growth in self-possession, in uniqueness, and intensity of his activity as an ego.—The climax of this development is reached when the ego is able to retain full self-possession, even in the case of a direct contact with the all-embracing Ego. As the Koran says of the Prophet's vision of the Ultimate Ego: 'His eye turned not aside, nor did it wander' (53: 17).—This is the ideal of perfect manhood in Islam. Nowhere has it found a better literary expression than in a Persian verse which speaks of the holy Prophet's experience of Divine illumination: 'Moses fainted away by a mere surface illumination of Reality; Thou seest the very substance of Reality with a smile!'



## 4

## TOLERANCE

MUHAMMAD IQBAL<sup>1</sup>

The God-intoxicated Faqir is neither of the East nor of the West,  
 I belong neither to Delhi nor Isfahan nor Samarkhand:  
 I speak out what I consider to be the truth  
 I am neither befooled by the mosque nor this modern civilization.

Religion is a constant yearning for perfection,  
 It begins in reverence and ends in Love;  
 It is a sin to utter harsh words  
 For the believer and the unbeliever are alike children of God.

What is *Admiyat*? Respect of man!  
 Learn to appreciate the true worth of man;  
 The man of Love learns the ways of God  
 And is benevolent alike to the believer and the unbeliever.

## 5

## THE CONCEPT OF MAN: EASTERN AND WESTERN

ABUL KALAM AZAD<sup>2</sup>

In speaking of the East and the West, we are thinking only of certain special features in the thought of these regions. This cannot and does not mean that there are not large areas of common and agreed ground. Man all over the world has adopted common methods of reasoning and thought. The human reason is one and identical. Human feelings are largely similar. The human will operates in more or less the same manner in similar

<sup>1</sup> Muhammad Iqbal in *Bal-i-Jibril* and *Javid-Nama*, quoted by K. G. Saiyidain, *Iqbal's Educational Philosophy*, p. 184, 186.

<sup>2</sup> Abul Kalam Azad, in *Humanism and Education in East and West*, pp. 30-6.

situations everywhere. It is therefore natural that the human's way of looking at himself and the world is largely common in different parts of the world. His attitudes towards the unknown mysteries of existence are also largely similar. The Greeks who looked with admiration and awe upon the peaks of Olympus shared the same feelings as the Indians who meditated in the valleys of the Himalayas and looked upon their eternal snows.

In spite of large areas of agreement, human minds in different regions of the world have adopted a different approach to some of their common problems. Even where the approach has not been different, there has been a tendency to place a different emphasis on the different aspects of common problems and common solutions. No two situations are exactly alike. It was inevitable that people in different regions should pay greater attention to different aspects of common problems. It is on account of such differences in emphasis that we describe a particular mode of thought as characteristic of a particular nation or region. . . . Even where the solutions are similar in pattern and outline, there are differences in shade and colour which justify us in calling some of the solutions Eastern and others Western.

There are, as I have said, many points in common between the views of philosophers in the East and the West but the emphasis is different in India, Greece and China as strikes us from the very beginning of recorded history. In India, the emphasis of philosophy has, on the whole, been on the inner experience of man. Philosophers here have sought to understand man's inner nature, and in this pursuit have gone beyond the regions of sense, intellect and even reason and sought to assert the identity of man with a deep hidden reality. In Greece, the philosopher has been interested mainly in understanding the nature of the world outside. He has sought to determine the place of man in the outer world. His view has therefore been, on the whole, more extrovert than in India. In China, on the other hand, philosophers have not worried about the inner nature of man nor about external nature but have concentrated on the study of man in relation to his fellows. These differences in orientation have exerted a profound influence on later developments of philosophy in each of these



regions. We find therefore that there are striking difference in their respective concepts of man.

The Greeks approached the concept of man from an external point of view. Hence we find that from the earliest times, Greek philosophy devotes far greater attention to what man does rather than to what man is. It is true that some of the earlier Greek philosophers thought of man as essentially a spiritual entity, and we find that this is perhaps the prevailing mode of thought till the time of Plato. With the advent of Aristotle, there began, however, a new orientation in which the attention is diverted from the idea of man to man's activities in the world here and now. Under the influence of Aristotle who defined man as a rational animal, philosophy became more positive. In course of time, this positive, empirical and scientific attitude became the prevailing climate of thought in the West. Rationality distinguishes man from other animals, and it is through the exercise of rationality that he has advanced far beyond his early animal origin. Nevertheless, he remains essentially and fundamentally a progressive animal. Rarely has this thought been expressed so beautifully as by the German philosopher, Riehl. While he admits that man has descended from the animal, he points out that he has now reached a stage where he must look above and not below. He is the only animal that stands erect and can continue to do so only if his look is upward. God is the goal towards which man must strive if he is to regain his present stature.

It is true that the influence of Christianity and the persistence of the Platonic tradition remained a powerful element in European thought. Thus we find that the scholastics in the medieval ages were at times more theologians than philosophers. Even in the modern period, there is a strong religious idealistic strain in European thought. Since the beginning of the modern age, this strain has, however, steadily yielded place to a philosophical outlook dominated by the concepts of science. The triumphant progress of science began in the seventeenth century and increased man's power over nature. The success of science dazzled the Western mind and induced a faith in its unfailing efficacy. The West sought to apply the concepts and methods of science in all fields of human experience and treat man also as an object among other objects. In course of time, a

materialistic and scientific temper became the pervasive outlook of the West. We find a culmination of this development in the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. Darwin sought to establish that his mentality is largely the resultant of his material environment. Freud in the twentieth century went a step further and taught that not only is man descended from animals, but his mentality retains even today traces of his animal origin.

As opposed to this conception of man as a progressive animal, we find in the East a completely different concept of man. The East has from the very beginning emphasized man's intrinsic spirituality. The contemplation of the inner reality of man gave rise to the philosophy of Vedānta in India and Sufism in Arabia. This spiritual concept of man has deeply influenced the mentality of man throughout the East and is not unknown even in the West. According to this outlook, we cannot understand the essence of man if we regard him as only a material entity. The real nature of man can be understood only if we conceive of him as an emanation of God. There was in Eastern philosophy a strong pantheistic strain. In different schools of Indian philosophy, all things are regarded as expressions of God's being but even then man belongs to a special category. For his is the highest manifestation of God's being. In the words of the Gītā, (XI: 18):

Thou art the Imperishable, the Supreme to be realized.

Thou art the ultimate resting-place of the universe,

Thou art the undying guardian of the eternal law.

Thou art the Primal Person.

Similarly we find that according to the Sufis, man is a wave of the boundless sea that is God. He is a ray of the Sun that is God. Man can regard himself as different from the Eternal Being only so long as his vision is clouded by the evil of ignorance. Once there is enlightenment, all these distinctions dissolve and man recognizes himself as a moment in the being of the eternal.

The concept of man which the East has framed regards him as not merely an animal superior to all earthly creatures but as essentially different in nature. Man is not first among equals but has a being which is higher than that of any other



creature. He is not only a progressive animal, but reveals in his being the lineaments of God Himself. In fact his nature is so high and elevated that nothing higher is conceivable to human reason. In the words of *Chhândogya Upaniṣad* (9: 4): 'That is Reality. That is Ātman (soul). That art thou.' This doctrine has also been beautifully expressed in Arabic: *Man arafa nafsahu faqad arafa rabbahu* (He who knows himself knows God). The same principle, when further developed, gives rise to the idea that man is not an isolated individual but contains in himself the entire universe. In the words of the *Gītā* (XI: 7): 'Here today, behold the whole universe, moving and unmoving and whatever else thou desirest to see, O Guḍākeśa (Arjuna), all unified in My body.' A Sufi poet has expressed the same concept in the Arabic verse: *Watahsat annaka jarmun saghir, Wa fika antavi alemun akbaru*.<sup>1</sup> It will be readily agreed that there can be no higher concept of man. God marks the highest limit of human thought. By identifying man with God, the Eastern concept of man elevates him to godhead. Man has therefore no other goal but to re-establish his identity with God. He thus becomes superior to the entire creation.

We have till now discussed the concept of man from the point of view of the philosophies in the East and the West. We now wish to review briefly what religion has to say on the question. If we consider the attitude of Judaism and Christianity, we find a clear statement in Old Testament that God created man in His own image. From this it would follow that man shares in the attributes of God. A strong element of spiritual mysticism has characterized the attitude of Christianity and has acted as a check to the predominance of extreme materialistic tendencies.

In Islam we find traces of the influence of the same outlook. In fact the Koran has gone a step farther in its exaltation of man. The Koran proclaims that not only is man created in the image of God but is His regent on earth. In speaking of the creation of Adam, God says (2: 29): *Inni Ja'elun fil arde khalifat* (I want to create my viceroy on earth). This idea of the viceroyalty of man profoundly influenced the Arab philosophers.

<sup>1</sup> Thou thinkest that thou art a small body; thou knowest not that a universe greater than the physical world is contained in thee.

Two things may be noted in this connection. As regent of God on earth, man has an immediate affinity with Him. This also makes man superior to all creation and makes him master not only of animal life but also of the forces of nature itself. The Koran proclaims again and again. (XIII: 45): 'Whatever is on the earth or in the heavens has been made subject to man.' It is generally recognised that Aristotle deeply influenced most of the Arab philosophers, but even in their interpretation of Aristotle, they show clear indications of the influence of the idea of man's viceroyalty of God. Avicenna (Ibn Sina) and Averroës (Ibn Rushd) are metaphysically Aristotelians but their spiritual orientation in Islam makes them recognize that since man shares in God's attributes, there is no limit to the heights which he can attain in both knowledge and power. Muslim scholastics like Al Ghazzali, ar Razi, ar Raghīb Ispahani and other have further elaborated this idea in their various philosophical writings.

We must, however, admit that while the conception of man in both Vedānta and Sufism gives him a lofty status, neither of these philosophies can escape the charge that if, on the one hand, they set no limit to human capacity, they, on the other hand, imply an element of fatalism that circumscribes man's power. The explanation of this paradox is to be found in their concept of the relation of man to God. Since man is an emanation of divinity, whatever man does is ultimately God's doing: Whatever happens is due to the will of God. From this it is but another step to think of man as a mere toy in the hands of fate.

It has been said that while the concepts of Vedānta and Sufism in their pure form have been responsible for some of the highest spiritual attainments of man, they have to some extent acted as an impediment to human progress on the secular plane. Emphasis on the unity of man with God made society relatively insensitive to human suffering, as such suffering was regarded as mere illusion. We find, therefore, that Eastern societies have often been indifferent to the removal of the causes of social malaise. This explains why some modern thinkers are seeking for a formulation of the philosophy of Vedānta without its fatalism.

There is a similar paradox in the Western concept of man. A philosophy of materialism would, *prima facie*, seem to



indicate a determinist outlook on life. Since the law of causality reigns throughout the material world, the same law would tend to hold in the field of human action. This tendency culminates in the psychological theories of the Behaviourists. The Western mind, however, asserted itself against such a deterministic concept and exhibited an energy of spirit which has rarely been equalled and perhaps never surpassed.

One of the main tasks [now] should be to examine how we can combine these two concepts [of man] which have so profoundly influenced both philosophy and religious outlook in the East and the West. The Eastern conception of man's status, if combined with the Western concept of progress, would open out to man the possibility of infinite advance without the risks implicit in the misuse of science. It may also indicate a way out of the fatalism which otherwise seems to follow from the Eastern conception of man's identity with God. The Eastern conception of man's status is not only consistent with the progress of Western science, but in fact offers an intelligible explanation of how scientific progress is possible. If man were merely a developed animal, there would be a limit to his advancement. If, however, he shares in God's infinity, there can be no limit to the progress he can achieve.—Science can then march from triumph to triumph and solve many of the riddles which trouble man even to this day.

There is a further reason why a synthesis of the Eastern and the Western concepts of man is of the greatest importance to man's future. Science in itself is neutral. Its discoveries can be used equally to heal and to kill. It depends upon the outlook and mentality of the user whether science will be used to create a new heaven on earth or to destroy the world in a common conflagration. If we think of man as only a progressive animal, there is nothing to prevent his using science for furthering interests based on the passions he shares in common with animals. If, however, we think of him as an emanation of God, he can use science only for furthering God's purposes, that is the achievement of peace on earth and goodwill to all men.

## F

# SOME ATTEMPTS AT SYSTEM-BUILDING

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## I

### FREEDOM AND THE TRIPLE ABSOLUTE

KRISHNACHANDRA BHATTACHARYA<sup>1</sup>

*(Absolute freedom, according to Bhattacharya, is to be entirely dissociated from the object and to cease to be an individual subject. Ordinarily the subject is identified with the body and is dissociated from all other things, or it is identified with the psychical life of presentation (image, idea, meaning) and is dissociated from everything else including the body. But the subject or consciousness can dissociate itself from this presentation also, conceiving it as an object. Finally, the individual self which introspects in this manner can also be conceived as something accidental and negated. What was subjective in the first stage becomes objective in the second and what was subjective in the second stage becomes objective in the next stage, and this too can be finally abandoned. The subjective and objective are thus relative, and the distinction between them implies a substratum in which it is made. This, which is itself neither a subject nor an object is the Absolute, or transcendental consciousness. Since the subject can dissociate itself from whatever was identified with it, it can entirely dissociate itself from the object and become entirely free. Such a freedom is conceivable and can be aspired for and gradually attained by making consciousness inward.)*

The Absolute of Bhattacharya is the consciousness which while transcending the subjective and the objective, makes their distinction and relation intelligible, but is itself not intelligible. It never becomes a definite object of thought, but is an 'unknowable negation', which can be only spoken of as what it is not. It surrounds all our positive experience and breaks forth into it. So all that is determinate and definite embodies the Indefinite, the Absolute, which also transcends it. The Absolute reveals itself in determinate forms. The spirit or the self is its most important determination, its symbol or shadow, while the object is a

<sup>1</sup> Krishnachandra Bhattacharya, *Studies in Philosophy*, Vol. II, pp. 88-92, 141-3.



*symbol of the self, as shadow is of light. The Absolute is what remains when the external object, the self-subsistent pure object of thought and the subjective or the pure contemplating act as well are denied one after the other. Without positively believing in the Absolute this final negation is impossible. The Absolute reveals itself through the functions of knowing, willing and feeling, of which it is the prototype. The Absolute is truth as it is positive being which cannot be denied; it is freedom as it is the negating process which transcends everything and is not limited by anything; and it is value as it is not an individual subject and nothing at all determines it. In other words, the Absolute reveals itself as truth, goodness and beauty. This is an inadequate summary of Bhattacharya's conceptions of freedom and the Absolute.—Editor.)*

### *The Subject as Freedom*

The subject is understood as what intends by the word I. The subject that intends is other than the subject that understands, being self-evident as self-evidencing to another and not to itself. The intuited subject is not only revealed but revealing: it is directly known as self-expressing in the spoken word I without being meant by it. It does not, however, intuit itself, as the intuiting subject also does not reveal itself. There is no introspective awareness of being revealed or incarnated in the word I, of one's freedom to self-expression as itself an evident fact. There is at best an imaginative demand for such awareness, for the realization of the felt identification with the word (or the object) as presupposing dissociation from it, for the transformation of the felt freedom into the intuition of freedom. It is in introspection that we are aware of this demand for the consummation of the freedom that is felt in every grade of subjectivity in respect of the object presented to it. The object appears alien to the subject up to the stage of thought. The feeling subject is free from the thought or meant content in so far as the latter is reduced to a symbolism. But it is still subject having being, subject that can still be object to introspection, being free, but not freedom itself. The introspective subject is, indeed, free from this being or possible objectivity and is thus freedom itself, but it is still a distinct individual though only unconsciously. It knows itself not as itself but as a distinct subject that is only possibly identical with itself. It is thus aware of a demand to know this subject as actually itself, to

annul its possible distinction from itself and, therefore, also its actual distinctness through the word I. The demand is for the intuition of the subject as absolute freedom.

The introspective self is aware of itself as the psychic self and the bodily self. At all stages it knows itself as to be known. It knows the bodily self indeed as known not only as object but also as definitely separated from other objects. But it does not know it like other objects as having a space-position and is aware of the demand to realize its positionless objectivity. The psychic self is also known as identified with objectivity as pure form or pure meaning but it is only felt as dissociated from the perceived body; and in introspection we are aware of the demand to realize this felt dissociation in knowledge. The introspective self is unaware of being objective to itself though it understands another self calling itself I and thus knows it as having objective distinctness, the distinctness of the word I. As, however, itself revealing through the word to another self, it is aware of itself as a possibly understood distinct entity. It knows itself not as known like the psychic or bodily self but as only to be known. As to be known, it is understood as what is only symbolised as distinct like the word I and what would lose its distinctness in being actually known. The subject is understood as freedom that is real and is characterizable by no objective category, not even by the category of distinctness. As we do not in introspection cease to be the bodily self which alone is actually evident to us, the subject that is absolutely unobjective or is freedom itself is to us only a possibility to be realized. The idea of realizing the subject arises only because we are actually identified with the body while we are introspectively aware of ourselves as not objective and yet as definitely positive. Introspective awareness of oneself is awareness of the subject as not only not objective in the sense of being thought or meant but also as what cannot be said to have the being of feeling nor to be contradictory like the feeling of the want of a feeling nor even to be distinct like the subject to which it reveals itself. At the same time it is not awareness of a mere negation or of an indefinite. This definite positive cannot be said to be not known, though as actually undissociated from the object we cannot assert it to be known. We are only aware of not being dissociated, being dissociated to the extent implied by such awareness.



Such implied dissociation is possible freedom that is to be realized as evident.

The consciousness of not being actually dissociated is present even in the stage of bodily subjectivity where alone actual dissociation is known in some measure and not merely felt as in higher stages. It is known, as has been pointed out, as the perceived separation in space of the body from the outside object, though there is a feeling still of one's body not being perceived in a space-position, all position being relative to it. In higher stages, there is no knowledge of freedom from the object but only a feeling of it, the feeling so far as it falls short of knowledge being the implicit awareness of not being actually free from the object. The higher the stage of subjectivity, the less is the freedom felt to be achieved though the more assured is the faith in its achievability. In the introspective stage, the feeling of achieved freedom lapses altogether, since it is here that the possibility of freedom is first definitely known. The faith in its achievability, however, is completely assured in this stage and takes the form of a conscious spiritual demand for the intuition of freedom as evident.

Three broad stages of subjectivity have been exhibited—the bodily, the psychical and the spiritual. In the bodily stage, three substages have been discussed—the body as externally perceived, the body as internally perceived or felt, and the absence of object known as a present fact. As externally perceived, the bodily subject is the centre of the perceived world but is not itself perceived as in it. As felt, it is definitely known to be not in this world though it is not known as not the externally perceived body. The subject that imaginatively perceives the absence of an object is also like the felt body not consciously dissociated from the perceived body but the subject that knows absence through conscious non-perception is consciously dissociated from it. He feels himself unlike the felt body as definitely without reference to space-position and as only the time-position—present or *now*, as distinct from the image of the absent object, which also is without this reference but is not consciously felt as *now*.

The image of the object whose absence is known in conscious non-perception marks the transition to the psychic stage. It appears as the object that is absent and is not yet felt to be

dissociated from it. The psychic stage begins when attention is shifted from the objective fact of absence to the image. As attended to, the image appears as imaging or the forming of a form, the process and the product being presented at once. The consciousness of the form as evident in the forming process and as a product that does not yet come in time *after* it is the idea as undissociated from the image. A later stage is the idea as dissociated from the image, or pictorial thought which wants to be imaged and is definite so far as it is imaged. Non-pictorial thought comes next, thought that is definite in itself and has properly no image though an image may serve as its metaphor or symbol. These grades of image and thought are the grades of presentation which is explicitly felt to be dissociated from the object. Such dissociated presentation is known in introspection to have no space-position and is at least not known to have time-position. The image still appears, however, as though it had spatial form and to be forming as though it were a temporal process. Some trace of this quasitemporal process may persist in thought but thought as a non-pictorial meaning is felt to be free from it and to be eternally complete. Still such meaning appears as though it were object, being introspectively believed like other psychical facts to exist outside introspection. Its presentational character is explicitly indicated by the consciousness of the absence of accomplished meaning in what we have called trying to think which may be taken as pointing to the positive freedom from objective meaning such as characterizes the non-presentational or spiritual stage of subjectivity.

The positive freedom from objectivity appears in the first instance as feeling. Feeling still seems to mean something but the meaning here so far as it is formulated is avowedly a symbolism for it only. To introspection indeed, feeling appears to be object but not as what may exist outside introspection. Its alien character is to introspection only apparent, being distinct only through introspection and not capable of existing outside introspection except as illusorily bound up with a presentation. The feeling subject has a being to introspection so that it is free and is not freedom itself. The next stage is the feeling of wanting a feeling, which is, in fact, a felt contradiction or self-negation that still appears distinct from the introspection into it. The introspecting subject, however, is not intro-



spected into and is self-revealing through the word I. It is aware of being revealed or evident not to itself but to the subject addressed and therefore of being *possibly* revealed to itself also. As thus only possibly evident to itself, it is unappropriated by itself, while as introspecting it is aware of addressing a subject and of being dissociated from it by the very fact of addressing. It thus feels being distinct but does not know itself as distinct. It is aware of the subject as possibly free from distinctness, as its very self but not as exclusively its own.

I am introspectively conscious of my body as subject but not as not mine or the appropriated. I am conscious of a psychic fact as not mine, as subject that is not, however, not *me* as the known. As, however, I speak of I in introspection, I intend what before I spoke was not *me* but not what was not a distinct I. There is no introspection into introspection but just as perception is known indirectly in introspection into some other subjective state like memory, so introspection is known indirectly in introspection into feeling. Feeling appears to introspection as subject that has no reference to object, as I but still as I distinct from I, as the be-*ent* I illusorily distinct from the introspective I. Introspection into the feeling I then is awareness of the introspecting I as not distinguished but as only distinguished *from*, as that from which being and non-being are both distinguished, as that which cannot be denied to be distinct in itself but of which such distinction is not known.

The apprehension of I as not even distinct in itself is indicated by the consciousness of subjective illusion, of a mode of subjectivity that is not only unappropriated but unappropriable. There is occasion to correct the conceit not only of *my* body and of *me* as a presentation, not only of I as felt being but also of I as an actual distinct introspector. The introspecting self that I am indirectly aware of in introspection into feeling appears to be an actual self. In introspection into the feeling of wanting a feeling it turns out to be only a possible self that is still distinct as an introspector. But there may be the consciousness of a feeling being illusorily wanted: I may, for example, recognize not only that I am not religious but also that even my hankering after religion is not real but only a sentimental make-believe. Such recognition would be the awareness not only of an unappropriated but of an unappropriable religious aspiration,

of the self that only appears as I aspiring and *is not it*, is not an actual introspector and not even a possible introspector.

I am never positively conscious of my present individuality, being conscious of it only as what is or can be outgrown, only as I feel freeing myself from it and am free to the extent implied by such feeling. I do not know myself as free but I conceive that I can be free successively as body from the perceived object; as presentation from the body, as feeling from presentation and as introspective function from feeling. I am not introspectively aware of my actual introspective individuality but I am aware in my introspection into feeling that the self from which the feeling is distinguished may not actually introspect and may not even possibly introspect, that individual as it is as introspecting—individual or distinct freedom without being, it may be free even from this distinctness, may be freedom itself that is de-individualized but not therefore indefinite—absolute freedom that is to be evident.

### *The Triple Absolute*

The absolute may be generally defined from the standpoint of reflection as what is free from the implicational dualism<sup>1</sup> of content and consciousness. There are three ways in which this freedom can be understood. The content may be freed from its reference to consciousness, i.e. from its contenthood. Or consciousness may be freed from its reference to content, in which case it ceases to be conscious of anything beyond itself. Or the implicational relation itself may be freed from its terms as a definite self-subsistent unity. The known that is free from its contenthood is known as the content that need not be content, is the self-evident *is*, just what we call *truth*—the absolute for knowing. Consciousness that is free from its content (in the sense that it solely constitutes its content, makes the content a content, creates its distinction from itself) is *freedom* of the will—the absolute for willing. The implicational relation of content and consciousness that is freed from their

<sup>1</sup> What he means seems to be this: The peculiar relation between consciousness and its content of which we are aware as distinct from the former but in necessary reference to it, is 'implicational dualism'. The Absolute is that which is not only distinct from but has also no reference to consciousness (knowing, feeling and willing). The Absolute is what 'I' is not. It is positively believed, but only negatively understood.—Editor.



distinction as a unity is *value* in itself—the absolute for feeling.

Truth, freedom and value then are absolutes for knowing, willing and feeling. It is impossible to avoid this triple formulation of the absolute though the notion that there are three absolutes would be just as illegitimate as the notion of there being only one absolute. The absolute is not a *known content*, about which alone the question 'one or many' has meaning. Truth is self-evident and is as such known but is no content; of value as the self-subsistent unity of content and consciousness, we cannot say either that it is not known or that it is like truth self-evident and, therefore, is no content; and there is no question even of knowing freedom, the belief in freedom being, as Kant pointed out, no intuition but willing itself. It is meaningless therefore to cognitively assert that there are three absolutes or one absolute. The absolute has, however, to be formulated in this triple way. Each is absolute but what are here understood as *three* are only their verbal symbols, they themselves being understood together but not *as together*.

For freedom, an alternative name would be reality. The real is understood either as will or what is given to will. Will means free will or freedom which though not theoretically known is not disbelieved, the belief in willing being willing itself. The expression of willing is always an imperative 'let this be done', which means no known being and, if anything, means, 'let this known situation here be negated, *used* as means, melted into the future'. Willing in this sense is the negation of being and is yet real, its reality consisting in the supersession of being. This comes out more explicitly in the consciousness of the imperative as the moral *ought*. *Ought* is real as the explicit rejection of the *is* or the actual that is known, explicit annulment of the known being of the presupposed 'natural willing'. Known being may be real but reality is understood in its purity as the conative rejection of known being; or more accurately, since everything has to be understood here in conative terms, as the freedom to withdraw or abstain from 'natural willing'. Natural willing, called 'natural' in reference to the *ought*, is in itself an imperative; the person who wills says to himself 'let this be done' and not 'I am doing it'. So any willing and specially the willing to abstain from willing is un-

knowable freedom or reality. What is given to the will is also said to be real because either it is consumed by the will as a means to itself as end or if it cannot be so consumed, it has to be taken as an opposed will. Freedom or reality may accordingly be taken as synonymous.

Freedom or reality then is not known or, in other words, it is meaningless to call it truth. The true is the self-evident, that of which we are conscious as known but not as known content. Freedom or willing is not known at all or if we are aware of knowing it, we are aware of its knownness as illusory. We are only aware in one grade of willing that a presupposed willing of another grade—natural willing, as we have called it—had an illusory being or appeared to be known. What is known, however, may be either the self-evident in its purity or some relation of *given* contents—meaning contents given *to the will*—with the form of self-evidence. Every judgement, as has been pointed out, involves a self-evident judgement of the form 'to know A is to know B'. The self-evident in its purity is eternal truth and not reality: but a relation of given contents is not only said to be true but cannot also be said to be not real.

The real then is not true but the true may be real. So speaking of truth and value, we may say that truth is not value but value is not untrue. Just as the predicates true and false do not apply at all to freedom or reality, so the predicates valuable or worthless do not apply to truth. Truth is not felt or if it is felt, it is felt as unfelt, i.e. as no value. But the predicate false applies to value in so far as the falsity of a felt value is denied though its truth cannot therefore be asserted. A value like beauty is evident but not self-evident; it appears as a content to an appreciative consciousness and appears without being disbelieved as an illusion but not as what need not have reference to the consciousness. The self-evident is the true and the evident is true if it implies self-evidence and till the self-evidence becomes explicit, it cannot be said to be false.

Again in respect of reality and value it may be said that while the predicates real and unreal do not apply to value, reality or freedom cannot be said not to be a value. Value is a felt being and is neither given to willing nor is itself willed into existence though it may appear as the fulfilment of willing. It is in this respect similar to truth which may shine out in fulfilment of



willing in the form of attention but is not brought into existence through its causality. Reality or freedom may, however, be felt and an act that is claimed to be willed is at least not morally indifferent if it is felt to have been genuinely willed. An act, in fact, that is felt to be morally indifferent is *eo ipso* felt to have been not free, not willing at all, the sole proof of freedom being in the retrospective moral valuation. To say that an act is free is to take it as not valueless though it may be going too far to assert that freedom is a value. Value is a felt *being* while freedom or willing is felt as the real *negation* of a known being and can at best be the felt being of a negation (of known being).

Thus it appears to be meaningless to speak of truth as a value, of value as real or of reality as true while we can significantly speak of value as not false, of reality as not valueless and of truth as not unreal, although we cannot positively assert value to be truth, reality to be value and truth to be reality. Each of them is absolute and they cannot be spoken of as one or many. In one direction their identity and difference are alike meaningless and in another direction their identity is intelligible though not assertable. Truth is unrelated to value, value to reality and reality to truth while value may be truth, reality value and truth reality. The absolute may be regarded in this sense as an *alternation* of truth, value and reality.

## 2

## THE NON-ABSOLUTE

BASANTA KUMAR MALLIK

*(Rejecting God and the Absolute as illusions, Mallik bases his cosmology on the duality of non-absolute being and non-absolute non-being, which enter into all relationships. These are the two necessary and sufficient categories which constitute the universe. Related duality is his basic concept. Our world is comparable to māyā, the next stage is Nirvāṇa and the final stage positive realization. In the first everything is confusion and dream-like, the second stage is that of clear vision and the last of principle. It is knowledge which primarily moves the universe*

\* Basanta Kumar Mallik, *Mythology and Possibility*, pp. 202-11.

*and can remove the illusion. The universe is passing through a stage of conflict and the discontinuous in which there is only suffering and nothing of real value. By abandoning the interlocking technique of warfare and persuasion and adopting the ethics of abstention, conflict and contrariety can be transcended and harmony and the continuous achieved. It is mankind's task to achieve the continuous Universe of harmony beyond the dual discontinuous Universe of conflict. In a number of books Mallik developed these ideas.—Editor.)*

My scheme of the Universe provides for three distinct stages: the First Continuous, which had no beginning but ended; the Discontinuous, which begins and ends; and the Second Continuous, which begins but does not end. This Triadic conception is the keystone of my work. Everything in my system of thought depends on whether the three separate stages I have defined form the basis of the Universe rather than the Absolute, which according to the traditional view had no 'outside'. Incidentally this distinction will decide whether my scheme is in fact altogether original.

The conception of Infinity in my scheme, whose provision is taken for granted, is split into two distinct conceptions; (1) with no beginning—endlessness, (2) with no ending—endlessness. My conception of Infinity accordingly provides for endlessness with two forms separated by the Discontinuous and so it must be noted that this duality did not make a continuous entity—if it did this would bring back the old form of Infinity which according to tradition was inconceivable and inexpressible.

The interval between the two forms of Infinity had, of course, to be filled in and this was done by the entity which begins and ends, in other words, by the Discontinuous. Between them the three forms—two forms of Infinity and one form of the Finite—exhausted the conceivable Reality. Each of the forms of existence has to be a function on its own and produce a definite result. Nothing else could be conceived. Neither the Absolute nor the interval had any chance to function which could produce any result except as Illusion, as we shall see.—This conception of the Infinite and Finite is new.

The next feature of my scheme refers to the conception of the Finite, which begins and ends. According to my position



we do not in any sense deal with the Infinite Universe during this stage: it is only when the Finite completes its round that the opportunity arises for the Infinite to come directly into the picture. What concrete form that Infinity will take on, as it will, it is not possible to distinguish at this stage; we can only have an assurance that it does in fact assume a concrete form.

A further point to note in my position is that the Finite Universe, the Discontinuous, is a dual Universe constituted by Non-Absolute Being and Non-Absolute Non-Being in perpetual relationship, producing the fulfilment of an ideal as well as the negation of it. Both are equal and bear together every form of relation, whether in positive fulfilment of the Ideal or in negative frustration of the Ideal, as just noted. What is peculiar is that Non-Absolute Being and Non-Absolute Non-Being co-operate in every instance in producing the result with suitable specific changes in their identities—hence different forms of existence. The fulfilment of the Ideal takes place separately, just as the frustration of the Ideal—or Negation—does. The Positive and the Negative form two separate Stages even as both the Positive and the Negative have the same status and attain the same right to fruition. The Universe has provided a whole Stage for both of them, each with a specific identity and each functioning separately. In every possible suitable form the Non-Absolute Being and Non-Absolute Non-Being function in strict co-operation, introducing either the Negative, or frustration, or the Positive, or fulfilment. The duality never departs; they change together, whether the result is negation or fulfilment. Naturally they function as specific entities and so the form of their existence appears in different, inalienable kinds. The early chapters of this book have dealt in detail with these issues and the reason why I am repeating here the salient features of my scheme and emphasizing them is that they may appear to be very involved. I have to return now to the analysis of the Negative, my chief concern, after one more preliminary statement and a final résumé of my position.

In its First Stage the Finite or Discontinuous Universe just begins; it is simply the achievement of the beginning of the Universe and nothing else. I am inclined to compare it with *Puruṣa*, which, as every student of Hindu philosophy is aware,

also just exists; it does not create or function. In my scheme, as I have just noted, the First Stage just exists and does not create or function. It is left to the Second Stage to create; and since, it may be added, creation conceives the Ideal, there must be the function of realizing the Ideal—this implies further Stages, just as, without any question, the First Stage is implied by the Second Stage. In no other connection, however, do the First Stage and Second Stage imply one another. The function of the First Stage again is to be wholly responsible for all existence—no other Stage has to account for existence. In fact no other Stage is responsible for existence. The beginning and creation are altogether separated. Apart from this resemblance between my First Stage and *Puruṣa* the only other resemblance to my ancestral thought is that the Second Stage is occupied with the whole of creation, the female principle. These are the only two resemblances but the way in which they are worked out is quite different.

I have covered the salient points to which I wished to draw attention and it now remains to point out the specific distinctions. Roughly, my Second Universe, the Discontinuous Universe, is a simple economy, which begins and creates separately. And since 'creation' must imply conceiving an Ideal—and, naturally, its realization—the notion of Stages has to appear on the scene. Finally, as realization implies both affirmation and negation, or the Positive and the Negative, the Stages multiply. There are altogether five Stages.

It is in the Third Stage that nothing but the negation of the Ideal is brought about. It is wholly and entirely the Stage of the Negative. Nothing of the Positive or of fulfilment of the Ideal can have anything to do with it. Here is a notion to be specially marked—I want my readers to observe precisely the change I have introduced. Besides, the Universe which I have called Non-Absolute and which stands definitely without any help from the Universe of the Absolute has still in some sense been tied up with the Universe of the Absolute. The Absolute appeared in the shape of 'possibility of the Absolute', but this change in its constitution did not stay permanently. The possibility of the Absolute was worked out by the category of illusion—how this happens and why, I have earlier discussed—with the result that the realm of possibility divided into stages.



What all this means I have developed fully elsewhere. The Absolute forms a Stage by itself after division takes place—it is no longer a 'possibility'—and it is this Stage which we have so far known as the Universe. Note, however, that it was only an illusion, though this was for a period hidden.

It remains to add to this short account of the Second Universe that both the Positive and the Negative, and also the Absolutes, are responsible for Conflict, as well as the possibility of the Negative. Truth and Illusion were equally fully efficient and nothing which was conceivable could be thrown out or disposed of as food for scepticism. Illusion and the other forms of existence have accordingly been made as respectable as Truth.

My conception of the Negative is altogether different from that given anywhere else. The Positive and the Negative, for instance, have lost their absoluteness, except in the form of Illusion. Also, it might be of use to emphasize that the Absolute has up to now not only been the only Positive, but has also been expected definitely to be capable of destroying the Negative in the shape of the Unreal and Non-Being. What actually happened, to complete the picture, was that two conceptions of the Absolute arose as a matter of course in two opposite forms, unity and individuality, and these two forms fell into perpetual conflict, ending necessarily in scepticism. Those who are familiar with my scheme will no longer insist on the historical view. In fact the whole of history, which created what we know as tradition, has in the nature of things disappeared. The final conclusion will necessarily result in the Absolute Negative and complete frustration.

What I am suggesting is that both success and failure of the two opposed historical forms of the Absolute, monistic and pluralistic, are bound to occur and are equally bound to be only temporary, for the simple reason that the whole of the procedure in tradition was determined by illusion. We are dealing with the realm of illusion—the only reality that made possible the birth of the Negative, which in my scheme is a value. And the fact is that those who took part in the performance of the Negative went through every form of suffering, frustration and doubt. But this, strangely, as I have just suggested, was not in vain. The explanation is that in my scheme both Being and Non-Being are equally valuable, and therefore true. The

Buddha did not reach this view; in fact nobody has held it—it did not strike them. Perhaps those who believed in the Absolute, whether in the monistic or the pluralistic form, held that the Negative could not be given a place by the Positive on equal terms. The Negative had to be excluded universally in the past. What prevailed, according to the traditional view, was the Positive, as we have just indicated.

All that tradition followed on behalf of the Absolute must be rejected as Illusory. Tradition in actual fact had nothing to do with either the Positive or Negative, the reason being that the Absolute had no reality but was altogether illusory. The Non-Absolute embraces both the Positive and the Negative, and for that reason is the only Reality.

The Stage of the Negative, like all other stages in my scheme, is, however, short-lived. It begins and ends. And the Fourth Stage follows the Third Stage of the Negative.—What is the total result of entering the Fourth Stage, it may be asked? The Fourth Stage embodies a state of assurance and certainty; all differences which are germane to conflict have necessarily to disappear, there is no use for them in any form. What appears in their place is agreement and a solid sense of unity. There is nothing concrete in this state; it is the Stage of Categorical Necessity, nothing more nor less than that. All forms of the Negative are dispelled as this Stage enters—or, more correctly, as the Third Stage is removed. There is evidence that unity and multiplicity no longer clash but harmonize—but only, strictly as categories.

## 3

## THE INDWELLING LORD

SURENDRANATH DASGUPTA<sup>1</sup>*The Self and Spiritual life*

There is no ground whatsoever to affirm that there is one unchanged and unchangeable entity like the self to which all awarenesses attach themselves. It cannot also be asserted that

<sup>1</sup> Surendranath Dasgupta, *Religion and the Rational Outlook*, pp. 277–80, 284, 286–8, 204–5, 162, 161, 32, 34, 41, 299–300, 266–8.



there are no psychical states which do not rise up to a level of consciousness and that every consciousness must always reveal itself in a polarized form. We hold that there may be different levels of psychical states underneath the conscious state, which, without rising to the conscious level by their very existence, modifies and colours that part of the psychical state, which has come into illumination.—It is our contention here that our psychic states, moved in diverse ways by various fundamental activities, project selves of different nature.

Our notion of self is, in the first instance, limited to animal propensities and biological nature, but gradually it outgrows it. And the inherent social instinct, working from the moment of birth, together with the elements of social experience . . . become so fused together as to form an altogether new personality which is so woven up that every thread of it is a thread of social life. Such a personality is surcharged with social beliefs, aspirations, fears, apprehensions, ideals and the like. It is for this reason that catering for the needs of the society, acting in the manner in which the society desires us to act, its service and approbation become the most important needs and object of attainment for the individual. The individual self here is only a part of a bigger social self. . . . Though we speak here of the two selves, the biological and the social, and as matter of fact, we may speak of many selves, yet this multiplicity is only a matter of abstraction. In the self that works, the difference of the so-called biological and social selves, enters into such an intimate connection and is so integrated that there is no hostility or diversity among them. It is only when there is an inner conflict that the two selves appear to manifest their opposing characteristics; whenever such a conflict arises, the demands of the social self is felt, as a norm, which should guide and control the appetitive soul. The sense of the norm belongs to a category different from the content of an idea. It is a characteristic which suffuses and interpenetrates the entire complex self. It cannot, therefore, be presented before the mind in the form of a content. but it manifests itself in its peculiar way, as a sense of value. . . . We value our biological pleasure and the self-preservative instinct, but the unity that holds together the psychical elements, which forms the complex social self is wider and bigger than the unity established by the appetitive self. The complex of

a social self behaves as a whole and tries to maintain and sustain itself at any cost. Thus self-maintenance of the social self is felt again as associated with a higher sense of value than that of biological demands. We thus find the rule that the more uniting, the wider and the later emergent the force of unification is, the greater is its transcendence over and superiority to, the earlier and narrower uniting agencies. For this reason we may have a series of value senses, the economico-appetitive, the economico-social and the religious and the super-moral.

The spiritual life is an awakening in which norms of our moral life are extended in a unity that holds within itself man and the universe and their destiny together in a greater unity which reveals a purpose of the universe and man.—The ground of this spiritual life is the universal purpose that runs through nature uniting the one with the other in a way that the latter ones have always to depend on the previous ones, which again become the conditions for the emergence of newer manifestations. The old is always utilized in performing new purposes and new functions and there is thus almost an omnipotence in everything.

### *Emerging Unity and Purpose in the Universe*

If we ask ourselves what is this unity, what is this purpose, we do not find it so easy to explain. Purpose means the existence of the idea of one in the other. This idea need not be conscious but still it may be effective. To take a very simple example: the son exists in the father.—Throughout the whole chain of the material and the biological functions, each manifestation carries within its nature the mechanism and the arrangement, such that, its own existence is largely determined for the sake of its other. Thus in one purposive sweep we have the whole universe held together and grasped in a principle of unity. I call this unity a spiritual unity though it is manifested in material and living forms. It reveals a spiritual formula which in all its phases, can never be understood by any intelligible formula of a physical or mathematical type. In religion, however, we have an intuitive grasp and a direct intuition of the whole process of humanity in a flash without any reference to the detailed modes of unity. But in spite of this absence of reference to the different formulae of unity in different spheres and the common bond



of unity that runs through them, man in his religious experience feels himself a part of nature, and identical with humanity and the animal world. The exhilaration of his soul, which shines as a mystic light, regulates his conduct and other experiences, his relationship with his environment, and is in intimate unity with the universe as well as his ultimate dissociation from it. At this stage the sense of joy that suffuses him, does not tax him as does a moral ideal by projecting obligatory courses and demanding submission, but it makes morality easy and spontaneous. The joy, that runs through the veins and nerves, deluges, as it were, all other considerations and plunges the individual in such a stream of mystical ecstasy, that the complexity of the universe loses all its mystery, all doubts are resolved, and the whole personality of the individual is transformed into cheerfulness and blessedness. In its true nature there is practically no form of the intuition or immersion and we may call it by any name we please, such as the realization of the good or of God or participation in God's love.

All through the different levels of evolution, notwithstanding their varied characters and capabilities, there has been a steady progress in evolving richer and higher form of life and mind. The emergence of newer and broader concepts of values has characterized the different levels of consciousness; self-regarding impulses have given way to other-regarding ones, biological interests and desires have been replaced by aspirations, anti-biological in nature. The earlier phases of life and consciousness have helped the emergence of newer planes which, while depending on the previous ones, have revealed a novel and higher and richer arena of life. This being so, the investigations of biology have led to one great result, viz. the discovery of the emergence of higher human emotions and values out of the lower, of purer and brighter radiance and moral excellences out of the mere animal desires. The true essence of religion and morality lies in the unfolding of the sacred and soft petals of human heart in the beauty of disinterested and purest love and sympathy, a spirit of undying faith and hope in the superior order of things, the broadest outlook on life which shows itself in harmonizing the different values in a hierarchical order, so that life becomes worth living and ideals worth striving for. If we have a look into the lives and working of great men,

saints and seers, we find the same undeniable truth, that each one of them lived for one object, the transformation of all ordinary values into those of a wider and purer one; each one of them showed the irresistible and unshakable conviction that egoism has to vanish before altruism like darkness before light, hatred and jealousy and all mean and cringy conflicts of passions and instincts have to melt away before the sweetness of love, kind and living consideration for all fellowbeings, and all ties of worldly interest have to give way to the deeper and intuitive glimpse of a world beyond. That the ultimate end of life is realized in transcending and transmuting the states it passes through, is the lesson we derive from biology, and this is the secret of religion as well.

*God, the Transforming Spiritual Ideal*

We love pleasure and we love to be good. We want progress and we have persistent faith in our toil towards the ideal. But from where does the call of our ideal enchant our spiritual ears, like the music of Kṛṣṇa's flute from the groves of blossoming trees? What is it that instils its faith into us, hope and trust and determination, that run through our veins like a ruddy liquor? What is it that calls for our courage, in the midst of the most thwarting misery and shame? What urges us to surrender our vanity and humble our pride and makes us look forward for a life of pure sincerity, unsoiled and untrampled by the onslaught of our mad desires. Our experience, therefore, reveals to us a land of light, benevolence, and love, which shines far off in the mental heaven, always, eluding our grasp, yet always deluging us with its beams, such that love pulsates with every beat of our heart, the gestures of our face and every twinkle of our eye-lashes. Science has nothing to say against it. Science only demolishes the useless rubbish or imagery which were introduced in religion in the mythical ages for practical purposes.

Religion must be regarded as the reaction of human nature in search of a higher ideal. Religion is the vision of something which stands beyond, behind and within the passing flux of immediate things; something which is to be realized as the remote possibility of something that gives meaning to all that passes, and yet eludes apprehensions, something whose possession is the final good and is yet beyond all reach. It is the one element in



human nature which persistently shows an upward trend; apart from it human life is a flash of occasional enjoyments lighting up a mass of pain and misery, a bagatelle of transient experiences. The religious vision claims nothing but worship, and worship is surrender of the self. The power of God is the worship He inspires. He is a lord of the heart and we should be foolish to seek for Him a metaphysical and physical existence, tugged along the road of dust and dirt, with the presumptuous noose of our logical faculty.

The fundamental fact of religion is the recognition of the spirituality of man. This recognition is not a metaphysical postulate or merely an intellectual concept. It is the realization of an emergent urge that arises from the moulding of our entire personality, involving thought, feeling and will.—The recognition of a transcendent nature of the spiritual urge is the revelation of God in man. Looked at from the transcendent point of view, God may appear as the personified reality of our spiritual urge, as our father and master from whom we have emanated like sparks from fire.

One of the special ways in which the religious activity projects itself towards its ideal is found in the concept of God. God represents within himself the ultimate reality in the sense that the whole history of the urge from the inorganic to the organic and from organic to man is but the history of the evolution of God in Himself. It is in this way that we can conceive our God as being the Controller of the world and of ourselves, and it is in this way that we can think of ourselves and nature as being one with God or as being within Him. The Christian idea of the Holy Ghost may be interpreted from our point of view as being the emergence of the supreme value-sense manifested in our religious sense through which we can unify our nature as knowledge, will, and consciousness with God. It is through the emergence of this Holy Ghost in our religious experience that we can realize the true foundation of morality in love of God and love of man. In those types of religious consciousness in which God is projected as the ultimate reality and the ideal, we have special types of spiritual expression as illustrated in the experience of the mystics. This however, should not for a moment lead us to think that the projection or the experience of God in the human consciousness is

merely a subjective ejection, illusion or hallucination. The concept is the culmination of a history and its fulfilment, and it is the basis of all our experience. If the final religious urge is denied, we can find no reason for explaining the cosmic urge manifesting itself in the history of the world and history of man. The final fulfilment of the development of the historic urge in diverse ways at different levels of emergence finds its ultimate fulfilment in the satisfaction of the religious urge beyond which all experience fails. The religious urge, however, is not necessarily limited to the projection of God as different from us, but it is satisfied by the re-creation of our whole being and personality in accordance with an ideal, the truth of which is guaranteed by the spiritual experience and enjoyment associated with it.

### *God, the Vital Creative Energy*

Howsoever difficult it may be to arrive at the truth, either as knowledge or as activity or as feeling, there is always a search in our nature. And life consists in its independence and transcendence, in its power to draw reality into itself and to strive after it; to expand from within and to become a universe of its own. The failures of life are indeed there. The insufficiency and even the contradiction of life are daily experienced. . . . We feel that there must be a surplus energy somewhere in us, which should be able to carry us over these contradictions in a sweep. The whole of our inner nature cries in mortal agony, performs a penance as it were, a 'tapas' that it may die and from out of its ashes there may arise a fresh power and a fresh energy which may produce a true regeneration, and reveal sources of energy and power for attaining the good, rising over the contradiction, and achievement of truth which it could never conceive. It is the inner demand, the inner humility that is often interpreted as confession and prayerfulness to God. . . . We can only say that there is always within us a surplus energy, a surplus psychical power which acts as our inner providence whenever there is an urge for it, a sincere craving to rouse it from its slumber. . . . Whenever the conflict is harassing and there is a real demand for fresh power and energy for rejuvenating the tattered life, there is a free flow of that vital stream, which raises a man all on a sudden from the oscillation of his contra-



dictions. . . . Whether this concept is polarized in the form of a God, to whom prayers are offered and confessions are made, or whether the form is that of meditation or self-criticism and a prayer to one's own higher nature is immaterial, and it is here that we experience the spontaneity of our spiritual life. The God that is spiritual in content and form cannot be regarded as reigning in a distant place somewhere above the stars on a golden throne surrounded by His satellites and angels; for, such a concept is physical, it is an image in the three-dimensional space. There is nothing spiritual anywhere excepting in the spiritual experience of man. It has been explained above that the term spiritual with us does not mean simply a mental content, a mere idea having well-rounded edges of exact connotation and denotation; it is an enlightenment suffused with emotion and will, an urge possessed with a supreme sense of value and offering unique experiences of blessedness and relaxation. If God be spiritual this must be a copy of Him. It is in this form that He reigns over the heart of us all. His place of location is not in the space outside but in the space inside. He is the Lord of our hearts.

### *Religious Experience*

Few people can deny that in the expression of religious experiences a new set of energies, emotions and will are let loose and produces a turmoil in the system. But this does not necessarily mean that the source of energy is transcendent. It is also wrong to say that if all these facts can be explained by the ordinary psychological laws, there is no proof of influence of God in our lives, for God does not come as a person outside our psychological machine, he is the 'antaryāmin' or the inner controller. He sits, as it were, in our heart. This He, this Person, this love of God is the projection of a truth in a symbolic personality and it has a sort of emergence out of the religious aspect of our being. Its reality is not of the order of scientific reality. Even among the sciences we find that reality is not always of the same order. The so-called electric waves that form the ultimate physical reality have neither taste nor smell, and are thus entirely different from the physical objects of our everyday life. So again life reveals phenomena which are entirely of a different order from the physical material on which it is based. So

religion is an emergent factor in human life that expresses itself in certain beliefs and dogmas, and certain emotions and ecstasies and rouses certain will power to remodel the life on a newer and nobler line and often projects an ideal in the form of a person designated as God. The dominant expressions of the religious personality are often changed by reflection into a personal being like God having personal relations with us. What the mystic experiences as a love of God need not necessarily be interpreted as a physical existence of a God who loves us like a human being. But the intoxication felt out of the religious feeling is akin, in some of its pathological features, to love, and this is naturally described as the love of a transcendental person. The testimony of the existence of something transcendental, which we may have through religious experience, is a proof not of a physical God existing in time and space, but of a spiritual being, who reveals himself in our hearts. It is for this reason that we find that in certain religions this ideal, this spiritual existence is not projected as God, but as the *sumum bonum*, while in others it is expressed in a pantheistic manner as God, as all. Our psychological investigation thus leads us to the conclusion that the God of religion is a spiritual God, who is directly concerned with remodelling, controlling and ennobling our life in trust, sympathy and optimism, which is not disclosed as a constituent of the psychical factors, but is a projection of our religious being or religious personality. Whether this being or this ideal, which is revealed in the mind, is the same as the unknown source of the energy of the world is more than what a few religious persons may attest. It is no doubt true that when reflection is added to revelation of the religious spirit, it often happens that the religious person exceeds the bounds and makes metaphysical assertions that the God of religion is one with the God of metaphysics and the God of science as the ultimate source of all energy and life.



## 4

## THE TRIUNE REALITY

SRI AUROBINDO<sup>1</sup>

When we withdraw our gaze from its egoistic preoccupation with limited and fleeting interests and look upon the world with dispassionate and curious eyes that search only for the Truth, our first result is the perception of a boundless energy of infinite existence, infinite movement, infinite activity pouring itself out in limitless Space, in eternal Time, an existence that surpasses infinitely our ego or any ego or any collectivity of egos, in whose balance the grandiose products of aeons are but the dust of a moment and in whose incalculable sum numberless myriads count only as a petty swarm. We instinctively act and feel and weave our life thoughts as if this stupendous world movement were at work around us as centre and for our benefit, for our help or harm, or as if the justification of our egoistic cravings, emotions, ideas, standards were its proper business even as they are our own chief concern. When we begin to see, we perceive that it exists for itself, not for us, has its own gigantic aims, its own complex and boundless idea, its own vast desire or delight that it seeks to fulfil, its own immense and formidable standards which look down as if with an indulgent and ironic smile at the pettiness of ours. And yet let us not swing over to the other extreme and form too positive an idea of our own insignificance. That too would be an act of ignorance and the shutting of our eyes to the great facts of the universe.

For this boundless Movement does not regard us as unimportant to it. Science reveals to us how minute is the care, how cunning the device, how intense the absorption it bestows upon the smallest of its works even as on the largest. This mighty energy is an equal and impartial mother *samam Brahma*, in the great term of the Gītā, and its intensity and force of movement is the same in the formation and upholding of a system of suns and the organization of the life of an ant-hill. It is the illusion of size, of quantity that induces us to look on the one as great, the other as petty. If we look, on the contrary, not at mass

<sup>1</sup> Sri Aurobindo, *The Life Divine*, pp. 85-94, 98, 131-2, 386.

of quantity but force of quality, we shall say that the ant is greater than the solar system it inhabits and man greater than all inanimate Nature put together. But this again is the illusion of quality. When we go behind and examine only the intensity of the movement of which quality and quantity are aspects, we realize that this Brahman dwells equally in all existences. Equally partaken of by all in its being, we are tempted to say, equally distributed to all in its energy. But this too is an illusion of quantity. Brahman dwells in all, indivisible, yet as if divided and distributed. If we look again with an observing perception not dominated by intellectual concepts, but informed by intuition and culminating in knowledge by identity, we shall see that the consciousness of this infinite Energy is other than our mental consciousness, that it is indivisible and gives, not an equal part of itself, but its whole self at one and the same time to the solar system and to the ant-hill. To Brahman there are no whole and parts, but each thing is all itself and benefits by the whole of Brahman. Quality and quantity differ, the self is equal. The form and manner and result of the force of action vary infinitely, but the eternal, primal, infinite energy is the same in all. The force of strength that goes to make the strong man is no whit greater than the force of weakness that goes to make the weak. The energy spent is as great in repression as in expression, in negation as in affirmation, in silence as in sound.

We have to know what is this All, this infinite and omnipotent energy. And here we come to a fresh complication. For it is asserted to us by the pure reason and it seems to be asserted to us by Vedānta that as we are subordinate and an aspect of this Movement, so the movement is subordinate and an aspect of something other than itself, of a great timeless, spaceless Stability, *sthānu*, which is immutable, inexhaustible and unexpended, not acting though containing all this action, not energy, but pure existence. Those who see only this world-energy can declare indeed that there is no such thing: our idea of an eternal stability, an immutable pure existence is a fiction of our intellectual conceptions starting from a false idea of the stable: for there is nothing that is stable; all is movement and our conception of the stable is only an artifice of our mental consciousness by which we secure a standpoint for dealing



practically with the movement. It is easy to show that this is true in the movement itself. There is nothing there that is stable. All that appears to be stationary is only a block of movement, a formulation of energy at work which so affects our consciousness that it seems to be still, somewhat as the earth seems to us to be still, somewhat as a train in which we are travelling seems to be still in the midst of a rushing landscape. But is it equally true that underlying this movement, supporting it, there is nothing that is moveless and immutable? Is it true that existence consists only in the action of energy? Or is it not rather that energy is an output of Existence?

We see at once that if such an Existence, is, it must be, like the Energy, infinite. Neither reason nor experience nor intuition nor imagination bears witness to us of the possibility of a final terminus. All end and beginning presuppose something beyond the end or beginning. An absolute end, an absolute beginning is not only a contradiction in terms, but a contradiction of the essence of things, a violence, a fiction. Infinity imposes itself upon the appearances of the finite by its ineffugable self-existence.

But this is infinity with regard to Time and Space, an eternal duration, interminable extension. The pure Reason goes farther and looking in its own colourless and austere light at Time and Space points out that these two are categories of our consciousness, conditions under which we arrange our perception of phenomenon. When we look at existence in itself, Time and Space disappear. If there is any extension, it is not a spatial but a psychological extension; if there is any duration, it is not a temporal but a psychological duration; and it is then easy to see that this extension and duration are only symbols which represent to the mind something not translatable into intellectual terms, an eternity which seems to us the same all-containing ever-new moment, an infinity which seems to us the same all-containing all-pervading point without magnitude. And this conflict of terms, so violent, yet accurately expressive of something we do perceive, shows that mind and speech have passed beyond their natural limits and are striving to express a Reality in which their own conventions and necessary oppositions disappear into an ineffable identity.

But is this a true record? May it not be that Time and Space

so disappear merely because the existence we are regarding is a fiction of the intellect, a fantastic Nihil created by speech, which we strive to erect into a conceptual reality? We regard again that Existence-in-itself and we say, No. There is something behind the phenomenon not only infinite but indefinable. Of no phenomenon, of no totality of phenomena can we say that absolutely it is. Even if we reduce all phenomena to one fundamental, universal irreducible phenomenon of movement or energy, we get only an indefinable phenomenon. The very conception of movement carries with it the potentiality of repose and betrays itself as an activity of some existence; the very idea of energy in action carries with it the idea of energy abstaining from action; and an absolute energy not in action is simply and purely absolute existence. We have only these two alternatives, either an indefinable pure existence or an indefinable energy in action and, if the latter alone is true, without any stable base or cause, then the energy is a result and phenomenon generated by the action, the movement which alone is. We have then no Existence, or we have the Nihil of the Buddhists with existence as only an attribute of an eternal phenomenon, of Action, of Karma, of Movement. This, asserts the pure reason, leaves my perceptions unsatisfied, contradicts my fundamental seeing, and therefore cannot be. For it brings us to a last abruptly ceasing stair of an ascent which leaves the whole staircase without support, suspended in the Void.

If this indefinable, infinite, timeless, spaceless Existence is, it is necessarily a pure absolute. It cannot be summed up in any quantity or quantities, it cannot be composed of any quality or combination of qualities. It is not an aggregate of forms or a formal substratum of forms. If all forms, quantities, qualities were to disappear, this would remain. Existence without quantity, without quality, without form is not only conceivable, but it is the one thing we can conceive behind these phenomena. Necessarily, when we say it is without them, we mean that it exceeds them, that it is something into which they pass in such a way as to cease to be what we call form, quality, quantity and out of which they emerge as form, quality and quantity in the movement. They do not pass away into one form, one quality, one quantity which is the basis of all the rest—for there is none such—but into something which cannot be defined by any of



these terms. So all things that are conditions and appearances of the movement pass into That from which they have come and there, so far as they exist, become something that can no longer be described by the terms that are appropriate to them in the movement. Therefore we say that the pure existence is an Absolute and in itself unknowable by our thought although we can go back to it in a supreme identity that transcends the terms of knowledge. The movement, on the contrary, is the field of the relative and yet by the very definition of the relative all things in the movement contain, are contained in and are the Absolute. The relation of the phenomena of Nature to the fundamental ether which is contained in them, constitutes them, contains them and yet is so different from them that entering into it they cease to be what they now are, is the illustration given by the Vedānta as most nearly representing this identity in difference between the Absolute and the relative.

Necessarily, when we speak of things passing into that from which they have come, we are using the language of our temporal consciousness and must guard ourselves against its illusions. The emergence of the movement from the Immutable is an eternal phenomenon and it is only because we cannot conceive it in that beginningless, endless, ever-new moment which is the eternity of the Timeless that our notions and perceptions are compelled to place it in a temporal eternity of successive duration to which are attached the ideas of an always recurrent beginning, middle and end.

But all this, it may be said, is valid only so long as we accept the concepts of pure reason and remain subject to them. But the concepts of reason have no obligatory force. We must judge of existence not by what we mentally conceive, but by what we see to exist. And the purest, freest form of insight into existence as it is shows us nothing but movement. Two things alone exist, movement in Space, movement in Time, the former objective, the latter subjective. Extension is real, duration is real, Space and Time are real. Even if we can go behind extension in Space and perceive it as a psychological phenomenon, as an attempt of the mind to make existence manageable by distributing the indivisible whole in a conceptual Space, yet we cannot go behind the movement of succession and change in Time. For that is the very stuff of our consciousness. We are and

the world is a movement that continually progresses and increases by the inclusion of all the successions of the past in a present which represents itself to us as the beginning of all the successions of the future—a beginning, a present that always eludes us because it is not, for it has perished before it is born. What is, is the eternal, indivisible succession of Time carrying on its stream a progressive movement of consciousness also indivisible.<sup>1</sup> Duration then, eternally successive movement and change in Time, is the sole absolute. Becoming is the only being.

In reality, this opposition of actual insight into being to the conceptual fictions of the pure Reason is fallacious. If indeed intuition in this matter were really opposed to intelligence, we could not confidently support a merely conceptual reasoning against fundamental insight. But this appeal to intuitive experience is incomplete. It is valid only so far as it proceeds and it errs by stopping short of the integral experience. So long as the intuition fixes itself only upon that which we become, we see ourselves as a continual progression of movement and change in consciousness in the eternal succession of Time. We are the river, the flame of the Buddhist illustration. But there is supreme experience and supreme intuition by which we go back behind our surface self and find that this becoming, change, succession are only a mode of our being and that there is that in us which is not involved at all in the becoming. Not only can we have the intuition of this that is stable and eternal in us, not only can we have the glimpse of it in experience behind the veil of continually fleeting becomings, but we can draw back into it and live in it entirely, so effecting an entire change in our external life, and in our attitude, and in our action upon the movement of the world. And this stability in which we can so live is precisely that which the pure Reason has already given us, although it can be arrived at without reasoning at all, without knowing previously what it is—it is

<sup>1</sup> Indivisible in the totality of the movement. Each moment of Time or Consciousness may be considered as separate from its predecessor and successor, each successive action of Energy as a new quantum or new creation; but this does not abrogate continuity without which there would be no duration of Time or coherence of consciousness. A man's steps as he walks or runs or leaps are separate, but there is something that takes the steps and makes the movement continuous. (Aurobindo).



pure existence, eternal, infinite, indefinable not affected by the succession of Time, not involved in the extension of Space, beyond form, quantity, quality—Self only and absolute.

The pure existent is then a fact and no mere concept; it is the fundamental reality. But, let us hasten to add, the movement, the energy, the becoming are also a fact, also a reality. The supreme intuition and its corresponding experience may correct the other, may go beyond, may suspend, but do not abolish it. We have therefore two fundamental facts of pure existence and of world-existence, a fact of Being, a fact of Becoming. To deny one or the other is easy; to recognize the facts of consciousness and find out their relation is the true and fruitful wisdom.

Stability and movement, we must remember, are only our psychological representations of the Absolute, even as are oneness and multitude. The Absolute is beyond stability and movement as it is beyond unity and multiplicity. But it takes its eternal poise in the one and the stable and whirls round itself infinitely, inconceivably, securely in the moving and multitudinous. World-existence is the ecstatic dance of Śiva which multiplies the body of the God numberlessly to the view: it leaves that white existence precisely where and what it was, ever is and ever will be; its sole absolute object is the joy of the dancing.—But as we cannot describe or think out the Absolute in itself, beyond stability and movement, beyond unity and multitude—nor is that at all our business,—we must accept the double fact, admit both Śiva and Kālī and seek to know what is this measureless Movement in Time and Space with regard to that timeless and spaceless pure Existence, one and stable, to which measure and measurelessness are inapplicable.—Force is inherent in Existence. Śiva and Kālī, Brahman and Śakti are one and not two who are separable. Force inherent in existence may be at rest or it may be in motion, but when it is at rest, it exists none the less and is not abolished, diminished or in any way essentially altered. . . . It is impossible, because contradictory of reason, to suppose that Force is a thing alien to the one and infinite existence and entered into it from outside or was non-existent and arose in it at some point in Time.

If it then be asked why the One Existence should take

delight in such a movement; the answer lies in the fact that all possibilities are inherent in Its infinity and that the delight of existence—in its mutable becoming, not in its immutable being—lies precisely in the variable realization of its possibilities. And the possibility worked out here in the universe of which we are a part, begins from the concealment of *Saccidānanda* in that which seems to be its own opposite. Infinite being loses itself in the appearance of non-being and emerges in the appearance of a finite Soul; infinite consciousness loses itself in the appearance of a vast indeterminate inconscience and emerges in the appearance of a superficial limited consciousness; infinite self-sustaining Force loses itself in the appearance of a chaos of atoms and emerges in the appearance of the insecure balance of a world; infinite Delight loses itself in the appearance of an insensible Matter and emerges in the appearance of a discordant rhythm of varied pain, pleasure and neutral feeling, love, hatred and indifference; infinite unity loses itself in the appearance of a chaos of multiplicity and emerges in a discord of forces and beings which seek to recover unity by possessing, dissolving and devouring each other. In this creation the real *Saccidānanda* has to emerge.

An absolute, eternal and infinite Self-existence, Self-awareness, Self-delight of being that secretly supports and pervades the universe even while it is also beyond it, is, then, the first truth of spiritual experience. But this truth of being has at once an impersonal and a personal aspect; it is not only Existence, it is the one Being absolute, eternal and infinite. As there are three fundamental aspects in which we meet this Reality,—Self, Conscious Being or Spirit and God, the Divine Being, or to use the Indian terms, the absolute and omnipresent Reality, Brahman, manifest to us as *Ātman*, *Puruṣa*, *Īśvara*—so too its power of Consciousness appears to us in three aspects: It is the self-force of that consciousness conceptively creative of all things, *Māyā*; it is *Prakṛti*, Nature or Force made dynamically executive, working out all things under the witnessing eye of the Conscious Being, the Self or Spirit; it is the conscious Power of the Divine Being, *Śakti*, which is both conceptively creative and dynamically executive of all the divine workings. These three aspects and their powers base and comprise the whole of existence and all Nature, and



taken together as a single whole, they reconcile the apparent disparateness and incompatibility of the supracosmic Transcendence, the cosmic universality and the separateness of our individual existence; the Absolute, cosmic Nature and ourselves are linked in oneness by this triune aspect of the one Reality.

# G

## ETHICS

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### I

## THE GOOD LIFE

P. V. KANE<sup>1</sup>

The writers on *dharmaśāstra* meant by *dharma* not a creed or religion but a mode of life or a code of conduct, which regulated a man's work and activities as a member of society and as an individual and was intended to bring about the gradual development of a man and to enable him to reach what was deemed to be the goal of human existence.<sup>2</sup>

There is no elaborate discussion of the questions as to why a man should tell the truth or abstain from *himsā* (injury to sentient beings) and cultivate other high moral qualities. But it should not be supposed that no indications whatever are given of the reasons why this should be done. Two principles emerge if we closely examine the texts. In the midst of countless rules of outward conduct there is always insistence on the necessity to satisfy the inner man (*antara-puruṣa*) or conscience. Manu (IV, 161) says, 'assiduously do that which will give satisfaction to the *antarātman*' (inner self);—'Gods and the inner man mark the sinful acts'; *Mahābhārata*, *Vanaparva*, 207: 54 etc. The reason given for cultivating such virtues as *dayā* (compassion), [and] *ahimsā* (non-injury) is based upon the philosophical doctrine of the one Self being immanent in every individual, as said in the words '*tat tvam-asi*'. This is the highest point reached in Indian metaphysics and combines morality and metaphysics. That doctrine requires us to regard the goodness

<sup>1</sup> P.V. Kane, *History of the Dharmaśāstra*, Vol. II, Pt. I, pp. 2, 7-10.

<sup>2</sup> Kane goes on to say that according to the *śāstras* there are types of dharmas: those based on one's caste, station in life and one's qualities, those which have to be performed occasionally, and those which are common to all humanity. Truthfulness, non-injury, self-restraint, charity, compassion, etc., are virtues that ought to be common to all human beings.—Ed.



or badness of one's actions from the standpoint of other individuals who will be affected by such actions. Dakṣa (III, 22) declares, 'one who desires happiness should look upon another just as he looks upon himself. Happiness and misery affect one's self and others in the same way.' Devala says that the quintessence of dharma is that one should not do to others what would be disliked by one's self. Therefore our texts lay down two seats of authority in morals, viz. the revealed truth (*śṛti*) that 'All this is Brahman' and the inner light of conscience.

Another reason for cultivating high moral qualities is found in the doctrine of the goals or ends of human existence (*puruṣārtha*). From very ancient times they are said to be four, *dharma* (right conduct), *artha* (economic interests), *kāma* (satisfaction of sexual, emotional and artistic life), *mokṣa* (liberation of the spirit). The last is said to be the supreme end and to be attained only by the few, and the vast majority can only place it as an ideal to be attained in the most distant future. As regards the other three, there is a gradation of values. *Kāma* is the lowest of all and only fools regard it as the only end.—The *dharmaśāstra* writers did not condemn *kāma* altogether, they recognize that *kāma* has a place as a motive urging men to be active but they assigned it a low place. They recognized that a man shares with lower beings the impulses and emotions of sex, but that the satisfaction of these impulses is of lower value than the moral and spiritual ends proper for a developed human personality and therefore insist that it should be subordinated to *artha* and *dharma*.<sup>1</sup>—This teaching shows that there are proximate ends or motives and ultimate ends or motives, that the ultimate ends are really the most valuable and that the whole teaching of *dharmaśāstra* points to this that all higher life demands discipline both of body and mind and requires the subjection of lower aims to aims of higher value. Manu (II, 4)—says that the end of all activity is some presumed good. Manu further says (V, 56) that the natural proclivity of all beings is to hanker after the satisfaction of the common and lower desires of hunger, thirst and sexual gratification and therefore no stress is to be placed on them but on the cessation or curbing of

<sup>1</sup> Kane then quotes many texts which say that when there is any conflict of the other two ends with *dharma*, they should be given up. Some *arthaśāstras* however say that *artha* is the principal end.—Ed.

these. The Upaniṣads recognize the distinction between what is beneficial (*hita*) and what is most beneficial (*hitatama*). *Sāntiparva* (288: 20 and 330: 13) declares that what conduces to the greatest good of beings is 'satya' (truthfulness).

## 2

## LIBERATING KNOWLEDGE AND UNIVERSAL WELFARE

BAL GANGADHAR TILAK<sup>1</sup>

The question that I formulated for myself to be solved was: Does my religion want me to give up this world and renounce it before I attempt to or in order to be able to, attain the perfection of manhood? . . . Thus began my study of the Bhagavadgītā. I approached the book with a mind pre-possessed by no previous ideas about any philosophy, and had no theory of my own for which I sought any support in the Gītā. . . . The conclusion I have come to is that the Gītā advocates the performance of action in this world even after the actor has achieved the highest union with the supreme Deity by *Jñāna* (knowledge) or *Bhakti* (devotion). This action must be done to keep the world going by the right path of evolution which the Creator has destined the world to follow. In order that the action may not bind the actor, it must be done with the aim of helping His purpose, and without any attachment to the coming result. This I hold is a lesson of the Gītā. . . . The Gītā enjoins action even after the perfection in *Jñāna* and *Bhakti* is attained and the Deity is reached through these mediums. Now, there is a fundamental unity underlying the Logos (*Īśvara*), man, and world. The world is in existence because the Logos has willed it so. It is His Will that holds it together. Man strives to gain union with God; and when this union is achieved, the individual will merges in the mighty Universal Will. When this is achieved, will the individual say: 'I shall do no action, and I shall not help the world'—the

<sup>1</sup> Bal Gangadhar Tilak, *Srimad Bhagavadgītā Rahasya*, Vol. I (Eng. Trans.), pp. XXIV-VI, 455-66, 451-2.



world which is, because the Will with Which he has sought union has willed it to be so? It does not stand to reason. It is not I who say so: the Gītā says so.—If man seeks unity with the Deity, he must necessarily seek unity with the interests of the world also, and work for it. If he does not, then the unity is not perfect, because there is union between two elements (man and Deity) out of the three, and the third (the world) is left out. I have thus solved the question for myself and I hold that serving the world, and thus serving His Will, is the surest way of Salvation.

The most important direction of the Blessed Lord to Arjuna in support of the doctrine of Karma-Yoga<sup>1</sup> is that: 'even having regard to public benefit (*lokasamgraha*), you must perform these actions'.... *Lokasamgraha* (public benefit) means 'binding men together, and protecting, maintaining and regulating them in such a way that they might acquire that strength which results from mutual co-operation, thereby putting them on the path of acquiring merit while maintaining their good condition'. The words 'welfare of a nation' have been used in the same sense in the *Manu Smṛiti* (7. 144) and the word '*lokasamgraha*' has been defined in the Śāṅkarabhāṣya as meaning—'weaning men away from the tendency to take to the path of wrong'.

Whatever is considered proper by a Jñānin is also considered proper by other people, and they behave accordingly. It is the scientists [wise men, *jñānins*] who have to make people wise and ameliorate their condition. But such a thing cannot be done by mere oral directions, that is, by mere advice. . . . It is usual for people to test the correctness of the advice given by a particular person by reference to his own behaviour. Therefore, if the scientist does not perform action himself, that becomes an excuse for ordinary people to become idle. . . . Therefore, the Gītā says that a scientist never acquires the right to give up action, and that it is necessary for him to perform the various duties—for promoting universal benefit, if not for his own benefit. . . . If a man, to whom the whole world has become identified with himself as—'I am in all created beings, and all

<sup>1</sup> Viz. the doctrine that even the wise (*jñānis*) who have realized Brahman should continue to perform works. In the Gītā, according to Tilak, *lokasamgraha* means the welfare of all created beings, and not only human beings.—Ed.

created beings are in me' says: 'Release has been attained by Me, now why should I care if everybody else is unhappy?', he will be degrading his own knowledge by his own mouth.—For such a man to become engrossed in the happiness of meditation, is to some extent like attending only to his own selfish needs. . . . Active noble sentiments, full of sympathy towards all created beings, must arise in the mind of the man who has had the direct Realization . . . and the trend of his mind must naturally be towards universal welfare.—It has been stated in the *Vedānta Sūtras* (III, 3. 32.) that 'even if a man has acquired the knowledge of Brahman, he must go on performing those duties, which are his lot according to his qualification (*adhikāra*), so long as he lives, for the welfare of society'.—But it must not be forgotten that the advice . . . that all acts should be performed being free from attachment, applies equally to *lokasamgraha*.

Giving up the hope for fruit, does not mean giving up all kinds of desire, or entertaining the desire that nobody should get the fruit of one's action, or that if somebody gets it, he should not enjoy it. . . . But, though one does not entertain the *AMBITION*, or the *INSISTENCE*, or the vain Attachment, that the fruit should be obtained, it does not follow that the desire, and also the enthusiasm, to do a particular thing which has fallen on one's shoulders, as a duty, should also disappear with this insistence. . . . It is true that those persons, who do not see anything in this world except their own benefit, and who are continually steeped in performing actions merely by the ambition of reaping some fruit or other, will not believe that it is possible to perform actions, giving up the hope for fruit. But, the same is not the case with those persons, whose mind has become equable, and is in a state of renunciation as a result of knowledge.



## 3

## TRUTH IS LOVE

N. G. CHANDAVARKAR<sup>1</sup>

Broadly viewed from the historic point the religious and social life of India, so far as its lines can be traced with distinctness, divides itself into four successive stages, viz. (1) the Age of the Vedas, (2) the Age of the Upaniṣads, (3) the Age of the Buddha and Buddhism, and (4) the Age of the bhakti or Devotional School. But for the Vedas there would be no Upaniṣads; but for the Upaniṣads there would be no Buddha. These four stages are interdependent. Each led to the next and all the first three culminated in the bhakti or Devotional School.

[The devotional school of religion] had begun to rise in India [even] before Śankara's birth. The country had produced saints previously who had appealed to the masses more feelingly than [even] before Śankara's birth. The country had produced saints and Truth as Love for all without distinction of caste or creed. [But] these saints came after Śankara from all castes and creeds, even from the lowest castes, which to this day are despised by the higher castes as untouchable and unapproachable and subjected to utter social degradation. These saints took up the problem of Truth where Buddha had left it and improved upon it and also the Vedic and Upaniṣad conception of it. They accepted the view of the four Vedas that life should be one of activity and enjoyment, but they counselled moderation of enjoyment. They praised family life and looked askance at asceticism which abandoned the world. They differed from the Vedas which said that God is as incomprehensible as Truth. Agreeing with the Upaniṣads they held that truth was in man's Soul; but that mere contemplation was not enough to realize that truth for man, for 'God being Love and that Love shining in the Soul it should lead to deeds of peace, forgiveness, and mercy; Where these are there only is God the Truth'. That sums up their creed in essence. Then as to the Buddha, the saints accepted his gospel of *Ahimsā* (abstention from injury); also his condemnation of caste; but they ruled out his theory of

<sup>1</sup> Foreword to *The Life and Teachings of Tukārām*, pp. xii-xiv, xvi-xx.

the body as the enemy of man as impracticable for the very purpose of the human-hearted and universal love and good-will to all without measure, which he had preached and practised.

Borrowing the best and discarding the rest from the Vedas, the Upaniṣads, and the Buddha, the saints of India gave her and the world the following definition of Truth: 'Truth is *sama darśana*', i.e. 'Truth is loving others as thy own self'. Because Ṛta, the law of righteousness discovered by the Vedas, first flowed from Brahman as Truth, the saints identified Ṛta with Truth and called falsehood Anṛta, that which is not Ṛta. Because the Upaniṣads defined Truth as the Soul, residing in man's heart, they held that it is the Soul which binds us all through the Over-Soul, God, and therefore is the seat of Love. Hence Truth is Love. . . . This definition of Truth as Love of others as thy own self is given in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* which is universally regarded as the standard authority of the devotional school second only to the *Bhagavadgītā* or the Celestial Song, worshipped as India's New Testament. In fact the former is in substance a rendition of the latter. The *Bhagavadgītā* nowhere defines it in so many words as the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* defines it. But in several places it expressly declares that he is the highest Yogi (man of contemplation and action) who looks upon and treats others as his own self.

These saints further taught that the golden age for India is not in the past but in the present and the future. The *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* distinctly praises the present and future as superior to the past, because of the doctrine of equality of all castes and of women and men, held up as their hope by the gospel of truth defined as love of others as one's own self. For instance, the Marāṭha Saint Tukārām sang in that strain and proclaimed: 'The fulness of salvation has come for all. Its market is free. Come one, come all, partake of it with rejoicing. Here there is no distinction of caste, high or low, man or woman, Brāhmaṇa or Śūdra.' What does it mean but that the age of Truth was not that of the Vedas, or of the Upaniṣads, or of the Buddha but that of the Saints who held that Truth means not mere truth-telling but the practical regulation of life by deeds of love to all as one's own self turned to God as Truth and therefore Love. These Saints who so defined Truth were not dreaming optimists. Their teaching abounds with counsel that in this world we should



enjoy life by work, rest and sobriety of enjoyment and attain to Truth by stages of steady, persevering, continuous practice in the art of contemplation and deeds of love. Far from sharing the popular belief which has prevailed for centuries in India that the present Age is the Age of Kali, of decay and degeneration, they hold that this is the best Age, because it has made God accessible to all and opened the gate of life to even the most degraded and sinful.

[Hindu] modern history begins with the seventeenth century when Vaiṣṇavism preached the equality of all men,<sup>1</sup> when the Śūdra, the helot of the ancient Hindu, preached shoulder to shoulder with the Brāhmana (who welcomed and encouraged it), when the God of the Hindu was for the first time worshipped with hymns composed by a Muhammadan (Rasakhan), when Ramadāsa declared that man is free and he cannot be subjected by force, and when the Brāhmana accepted the leadership of the Śūdra in attempting to found a State.<sup>2</sup>

Of them who are unhappy and in distress, he who says that they are his, that man should be recognized as a saint. Know that God is in such a man.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Much earlier Nārada and Śāṇḍilya, The *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* (c. AD 800-900), the Ālvārs (fourth to ninth centuries AD), Rāmānanda, Kabir (1440-1518), Jñānesvara (1275-96), and Caitanya (1485-33) declared that among devotees there is no caste. Rāmādaśa was Shivaji's guru.

<sup>2</sup> K. P. Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity*, pp. 209-10.

<sup>3</sup> Tukārām (Ga. 960. 1-2.)

## NOTES ON AUTHORS

(Numbers in brackets indicate dates of birth and death)

*Aiyangar, S. Krishnaswami* (b. 1871)

Late Professor of Indian History and Archaeology, University of Madras; a pioneer of historical studies on South India.

*Aiyar, C. P. Ramaswami* (1879-1966)

Served as Prime Minister of Travancore for several years, and was for some time Member of the Executive Councils of the Governor of Madras and the Viceroy of India. Sometime Vice-Chancellor, Banaras University. A learned advocate, scholar and writer.

*Ali, Muhammad* (1879-1930)

A leader of Indian Muslims; was in the forefront of the Khilafat Movement and was an original member of the Muslim League.

*Ali, Syed Ameer* (1849-1928?)

Justice of the Calcutta High Court and Member of the British Privy Council; scholar and historian.

*Ambedkar, B. R.* (1893-1956)

Born a Harijan, he became a Buddhist during his last years. A great scholar and legislator, and Law Minister of India. Drafted and piloted the Hindu Code; 'Father of the Indian Constitution'.

*Appadorai, A.*

Formerly Director, Indian School of International Studies, New Delhi.

*Aurobindo, Sri* (1872-1950)

One of the greatest contemporary philosophers, a mystic and sage. Participated in the Indian fight for freedom in his earlier years and made a deep impact on it.

*Azad, Abul Kalam* (1888-1958)

An erudite scholar of Persian and Arabic, and a deeply religious man. Author of a great commentary on the Koran. President of the Indian National Congress and India's first Minister for Education.

*Banerjee, Surendranath* (1848-1926)

A President of the National Congress and one of the early advocates of national unity. He was a famous orator who did much to awaken national consciousness.

*Banerjee, Anil Chandra* (b. 1910)

Lecturer in History, Calcutta University; Professor of History, City College, Calcutta.

*Bhandarkar, R. G.* (1837-1925)

Professor of Oriental languages, Elphinstone College, Bombay; a famous Indologist and a great Sanskrit scholar; pioneer in India of Indological studies on modern critical lines.



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Retired Professor of Politics, Madras University.

*Bhattacharya, Krishnachandra (1875-1949)*

Professor of Philosophy, Calcutta University. A metaphysician of high order.

*Bhave, Vinoba (b. 1895)*

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A great luminary of the Indian liberation movement. See pp. 171-2.

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Retired Professor of Politics, Delhi University.

*Chandavarkar, N. G. (1855-1923)*

A liberal leader, social reformer, and Justice of the Bombay High Court. Formerly Head of Prarthana Samaj; Secretary and President of Indian Social Conference.

*Das, Bhagavan (1869-1959)*

A savant, theologian and mystic.

*Dasgupta, Surendranath (1887-1952)*

A great scholar and one of the foremost modern philosophers. Author of the monumental five-volume *History of Indian Philosophy*. Professor of Philosophy, Calcutta University.

*Datta, Batukeshwar*

A revolutionary, who along with Bhagat Singh threw a bomb in the Central Legislative Assembly Hall in 1929.

*Dhingra, Mohan Lal*

While a student in London, he became fired with revolutionary zeal and in 1909 assassinated a high official of India Office believed to be spying on Indian students' activities. He was hanged in 1909.

*Dutt, N. K.*

Formerly Principal, Sanskrit College, Calcutta.

*Gandhi, Mohandas Karamchand (1869-1948)*

'Father of the Indian Nation' and 'a great soul' (mahātmā); one of the foremost freedom fighters of the world; a man who tried to spiritualize politics.

*Ghosh, Ajoy Kumar (1909-62)*

General Secretary of the Communist Party of India 1951-62. Under his leadership the Party committed itself to 'constitutional communism'.

*Ghoshal, U. N. (b. 1886)*

Retired Professor of History, Presidency College, Calcutta.

*Gokhale, Gopal Krishna (1866-1915)*

Great parliamentarian, social reformer, liberal leader, and founder of the Servants of India Society.

*Golwalkar, M. S. (b. 1906)*

Leader of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh. Has a master's degree in zoology and a bachelor's in law.

*Habib, Mohammad (b. 1895)*

Retired Professor of History, Aligarh Muslim University. An authority on Mahmud of Ghazni and the Delhi Sultanate.

*Hussain, Zakir (b. 1897)*

An eminent educationist, economist and political thinker. Headed the Jamia Millia, Delhi. Was for some time Vice-Chancellor of Aligarh University, and Governor of Bihar. Vice-President of the Republic of India, 1962-7; and President from May 1967.

*Iqbal, Muhammad (1873-1938)*

Foremost Muslim philosopher of modern times, and one of the greatest Urdu poets. His ideas inspired the Pakistan Movement.

*Jaffar, S. M. (b. 1910)*

Sometime Professor of History in Lahore and Tehran universities. Director of Archaeology, Peshawar.

*Jayaswal, K. P. (1881-1937)*

A Barrister of the Patna High Court. Sometime Honorary Scholar, Jesus College, Oxford; Tagore Professor of Law, Calcutta University (1917). A distinguished Indologist.

*Kabir, Humayun (b. 1906)*

A leading Indian philosopher, critic and novelist, he taught for some time in Andhra and Calcutta Universities; formerly Education Secretary, India; a Minister in the Indian Government, 1957-1966. Member, Parliament.

*Kane, P. V. (b. 1880)*

A great scholar and authority on Hindu law and ethics. Author of the monumental *History of the Dharmasāstra*. He was for some time Vice-Chancellor, Bombay University.

*Khan, Syed Ahmad (1817-98)*

One of the earliest Muslim leaders of modern India. He tried to promote modern scientific outlook among Indian Muslims.

*Kosambi, D. D. (1907-66)*

Professor of Mathematics, Tata Institute, Bombay. A noted Sanskritist who made important contributions to Indian history, archaeology and numismatics.

*Law, Bimala Charan (b. 1891)*

Fellow, Royal Historical Society, London; Honorary Lecturer, Post-graduate Department, Calcutta University. Editor, *Indian Historical Quarterly*.

*Lohia, Rammanohar (b. 1910)*

Leader, Samayukta Socialist Party and Member of Parliament. A Ph.D. of Berlin, he is a courageous man of original ideas.



*Mahadevan, T. M. P. (b. 1911)*

Director, Centre of Advanced Study in Philosophy, University of Madras. President, Indian Philosophical Congress, 1955.

*Maharshi, Ramana (1879-1950)*

A great mystic and saint of South India.

*Majumdar, R. C. (b. 1888)*

Formerly Professor at Dacca and Banaras Universities, and Vice-Chancellor, Dacca University. Editor of the monumental volumes of the History and Culture of the Indian People. He is an authority on the Hinduized States of S.E. Asia.

*Mallik, Basanta Kumar (1879-1958)*

Tried to build an independent system of his own. He led an exciting life and lectured at Oxford for some years.

*Mehta, Asoka (b. 1911)*

A brilliant theoretician and socialist leader. Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission of India from 1963. Minister of Planning since Jan. 1966.

*Mookerji, Radhakumud (1884-1962)*

Professor of History, Lucknow University; author of several important monographs; an authority on ancient Indian History. For several years Member, Bengal Legislative Council; Member of Parliament, 1954-9.

*Munshi, K. M. (b. 1887)*

Formerly cabinet minister in the governments of Bombay state and India, and Governor of Uttar Pradesh; Founder-President, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan. Well-known scholar, historian and novelist.

*Murty, K. Satchidananda (b. 1924)*

Professor of Philosophy, Andhra University; President, Akhila Bharatiya Darsan Parishad, 1963. President-elect, Indian Philosophical Congress, 1968.

*Namboodiripad, E. M. S. (b. 1909)*

Chief Minister of Kerala, 1957-9; and from March 1967. A prominent communist since 1940, and considered a centrist, he became in 1964 an organizer of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), which seeks to establish a people's democracy through a mass revolution combining parliamentary and extraparlimentary forms of struggle. A leading theoretician.

*Naoroji, Dadabhai (1825-1917)*

One of the earliest advocates of self-government for India and a founder member of the Indian National Congress. He was a member of the British Parliament.

*Narayan, Jayaprakash (b. 1902)*

See pp. 169, 195. Among contemporary Indians his moral stature is second only to that of Gandhi and Bhawe.

*Nehru, Jawaharlal (1889-1964)*

First Prime Minister of India, he was primarily responsible for building a secular democratic state in India and for formulating the policy of 'non-alignment' followed by most of the newly independent nations.

*Pal, Bipin Chandra (1858-1932)*

He did much to awaken national consciousness and the urge for Indian independence.

*Panikkar, K. M. (1895-1963)*

Served as Prime Minister of some Indian States, and as Indian Ambassador in China, Egypt and France. Late Vice-Chancellor of the Universities of Kashmir and Mysore; and a brilliant historian.

*Paramahansa, Ramakrishna (1836-86)*

A great mystic and saint of Bengal. He taught that the different religions are but different paths that lead to God. He exerted an enormous influence on his contemporary intellectuals.

*Prakash, Buddha*

Professor of Indology, Kurukshetra University.

*Prasad, Beni (b. 1895)*

Retired Professor of Politics, Allahabad University.

*Qureshi, I. H. (b. 1903)*

Formerly Professor of History and Political Science in Delhi and Lahore Universities; a reputed scholar in Islamic Studies; a Minister of Pakistan Government, 1949-54. Vice-Chancellor, University of Karachi.

*Radhakrishnan, Sarvepalli (b. 1888)*

World renowned philosopher; sometime Professor of Philosophy in Mysore and Calcutta Universities. Formerly Vice-Chancellor of Andhra and Banaras Universities, Spalding Professor at Oxford and Indian Ambassador in Soviet Union. Vice-President of India 1957-62; President from 1962 to 1967.

*Raja, C. Kunhan (1895-1963)*

Professor of Sanskrit in the Universities of Madras, Andhra and Tehran. A courageous and independent thinker.

*Rajagopalachari, Chakravarti (b. 1879)*

Founder and leader of the Swatantra Party; was twice Chief Minister of Madras; last Governor-General of India. Gifted with an acute mind.

*Ranade, Mahadev Govind (1842-1901)*

Judge, eminent social reformer, and distinguished thinker. A founder of Prarthana Samaj.

*Roy, M. N. (1889-1954)*

After an experience of revolutionary activity, imprisonment, and *sannyasa*, he had an eventful life abroad from 1915 to 1930. As a candidate member and then full voting member of the Communist International from 1922 till 1929 when he was expelled from it, he was



the first leader of communism in India. On his return to India in 1930, as he was becoming a force in trade union movement and radical politics, he was put in prison from 1931 to 1936. Then joining the Congress, he ineffectively tried to influence its programme till he was expelled from it for championing the Allied cause during World War II. He organized the Radical Democratic Party in 1940, but dissolved it in 1948. A brilliant creative thinker of a high order.

*Roy, Rammohun (1772-1833)*

Eminent thinker and reformer. Founder of the Brahmo Samaj. He is to modern India what Bacon and Descartes are to modern Europe.

*Ruthnaswamy, M. (b. 1885)*

Formerly member, Madras Public Service Commission and Vice-Chancellor, Annamalai University. An important member of the Swatantra Party.

*Sardesai, Govind Sakharam (1865-1959)*

One of the great historians of India; the foremost authority on Marātha history, who has been compared to Mommsen by J. Sarkar.

*Saraswati, Swami Dayananda (1824-83)*

A great scholar and reformer. Founder of the Arya Samaj. A dynamic personality whose teachings rekindled pride in national heritage and led to Hindu resurgence.

*Sarkar, Jadunath (1870-1958)*

According to many the greatest historian India has produced; described as the Gibbon of India; a pioneer in Mughal historical studies.

*Sastri, K. A. Nilankanta (b. 1892)*

Retired Professor of History, University of Madras, and sometime Professor of Indology, University of Mysore; the foremost authority on Cola history and South Indian influences in the Far East; pioneer historian of South India treated as a single geographical unit.

*Sastri, V. S. Srinivasa (1869-1946)*

One of the liberal leaders, he was a great orator and parliamentarian. Served as Indian High Commissioner in South Africa and Vice-Chancellor, Annamalai University.

*Singh, Bhagat*

One of the few Indian revolutionaries with a clear political vision. By his fearless actions he became an ideal and a legend. Was hanged in 1931 for conspiring to overthrow imperialism.

*Sirkar, D. C. (b. 1907)*

Former Superintendent of Epigraphy, Government of India. Professor of Ancient Indian History and Culture, University of Calcutta.

*Tagore, Debendranath (1817-1905)*

A leader of the Brahmo Samaj. A Mystic. The father of poet Tagore.

*Tagore, Rabindranath (1861-1941)*

One of India's greatest poets and a Nobel laureate; he exerted a tremendous influence on the intellectual and cultural life of modern India.

*Tilak, Bal Gangadhar (1856-1920)*

Father of the national liberation movement. A great scholar.

*Tirtha, Swami Rama (1873-1906)*

After teaching mathematics for some time in a Lahore College took *sannyasa* and became a famous Vedantic teacher and exerted much influence.

*Varma, Viswanath Prasad (b. 1924)*

Professor of Political Science, Patna University.

*Vivekananda, Swami (1863-1902)*

Disciple of Ramakrishna; a great and dynamic personality responsible for the revival of Vedānta in India and its popularization all over the world.



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## APPENDIX

### PARTIES AND POLITICS AFTER THE FOURTH GENERAL ELECTIONS

#### *Party Position*

'India's fourth General elections,' wrote *The Hindu*, 'will go down in history as one of the most significant landmarks in the evolution of democracy in Asia and the world.' (Editorial, February 27, 1967.) These elections just over in February 1967 have demonstrated that Indian democracy has struck root and is flourishing vigorously. On February 28, 1967, with 502 results declared for the Lok Sabha (which will have a membership of 523), and on February 26, 1967, with 3,382 results declared for state legislatures (which will have a total membership of 3,543), the position of the parties was as follows<sup>1</sup>:

<i>Parties</i>	<i>Lok Sabha</i>	<i>State Legislatures</i>
Congress	279	1,641
Swatantra	41	258
Jana Sangh	35	294
Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam	25	138
Samyukta Socialist Party	23	168
Communist Party	21	120
Communist Party (Marxist)	19	126
Praja Socialist Party	9	102

The other seats have gone to state parties and independents.

The Congress has absolute majorities in Parliament, and in the state legislatures of Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Mysore, Kashmir, and in the Union territories of Tripura, Manipur, Pondicherry and Himachal Pradesh. In Rajasthan, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Panjab and West Bengal it has come out as the largest single party, and in Orissa, Madras and Delhi territory as the principal opposition party. The Swatantra is the largest single party in the Orissa legislature, the second largest in Parliament and in the legislatures of Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan and Gujarat, and the third largest in Mysore. The Jana Sangh has secured an absolute majority in the Metropolitan Council (legislature) of Delhi territory, and is now second largest party in Madhya<sup>o</sup> Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Haryana, and the

<sup>1</sup> The Lok Sabha figures are as given by *The Indian Express*, (Vijayawada), March 1, 1967; and of the legislatures as given by *The Hindu*, Feb. 26, 1967.

third largest in Parliament and in the legislatures of Bihar and Rajasthan, and is a force in Panjab too. Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam has an absolute majority in the Madras state legislature (138 in a house of 234), and is the fourth largest party in Parliament, but has no representation elsewhere. The Samyukta Socialist Party is the second largest party in the legislature of Bihar and the third largest in Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Kerala legislatures. The Communist Party is the principal opposition party in Assam and Maharashtra, the third largest in Andhra Pradesh and Kerala, and is a considerable force in Bihar and West Bengal. (In Kerala the SSP and the CPI each got an equal number of seats.) The Communist Party (Marxist) is the largest single party in Kerala and the second largest in West Bengal. The Praja Socialist Party is the second largest single party in Mysore, the third largest in Orissa and the fourth largest in Maharashtra.

As a result of these General elections, the Centre, eight states and four Union territories have Congress governments. In the Delhi territory the Jana Sangh dominates. In Madras the Kazhagam has formed the government, while in Kerala and West Bengal leftist United Fronts have formed governments. In Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Orissa, Panjab and Haryana, coalition governments respectively led by the SSP, Jana Sangh, Swatantra, Akali Dal (a State Sikh Party) and Jana Sangh are functioning now (May 25, 1967). In Parliament, the Swatantra and Jana Sangh combined have a total strength of 76, while the two Communist parties and the two Socialist parties have a combined strength of 40 and 32 respectively. (See table on previous page.) The fourth General elections thus show no general swing either to the right or the left in the country as a whole, but 'a change towards a more flexible, more responsive and ultimately more responsible balance'. (*Los Angeles Times*, February 25, 1967.) 'A period of great stresses and strains is inevitable, but Congress is still much the largest single political party—and India is still a democracy. Her leaders are men and women of high intelligence and long political experience.' (*New York Times*, February 24, 1967.)

### *Policies and Programmes*

The ideals and policies of the Congress Party have received quite adequate treatment in this book in Part II, D and F, 1. The Swatantra has been dealt with in Part II, E, 3; and Communist policy in Part II, E, 2, while the editorial footnotes for these extracts and the biographical sketches of A. K. Ghosh and E. M. S. Namboodiripad in 'Notes on Authors' bring out the differences



between the two Communist parties. A few lines about the other parties may be appropriate:

(1) The objective of the Jana Sangh is to rebuild India as a '*Dharma Rājya*' (kingdom of righteousness) on the basis of '*Bhāra-tiya samskṛti*' (culture) and '*maryādā*' (correct conduct). It plans to make India a powerful, united and self-sufficient nation. It affirms that it wants a 'non-sectarian', but not a theocratic state.

(2) The Samyukta Socialist Party (United Socialist Party) seeks to make democracy 'concrete' through decentralizing political power by diffusing it among the centre, the state, the district and the village, and to achieve socialist integration through a technology based on 'small-unit machines' each costing very little, but fit for widespread efficient use in industry and agriculture dispersed in our numerous towns and villages. It plans to transform the present society completely, not only through parliamentary means but also through powerful mass struggles, based on the principle of civil disobedience (very much akin to Gandhian *satyāgraha*). So every single act of such struggles, it says, must be justifiable in itself. Its approach to international relations is set forth in Part II, F, 3.

(3) The Praja Socialist Party (People's Socialist Party) seeks to bring about equitable distribution of land, formation of a land army to reclaim all uncultivated land, substitution of land revenue by agricultural income-tax, and a ratio of 1 : 10 between the minimum and maximum incomes.

Both the Jana Sangh and the PSP plead for the development of nuclear strength by India, an independent foreign policy, and recovery of areas lost to Pakistan and China.

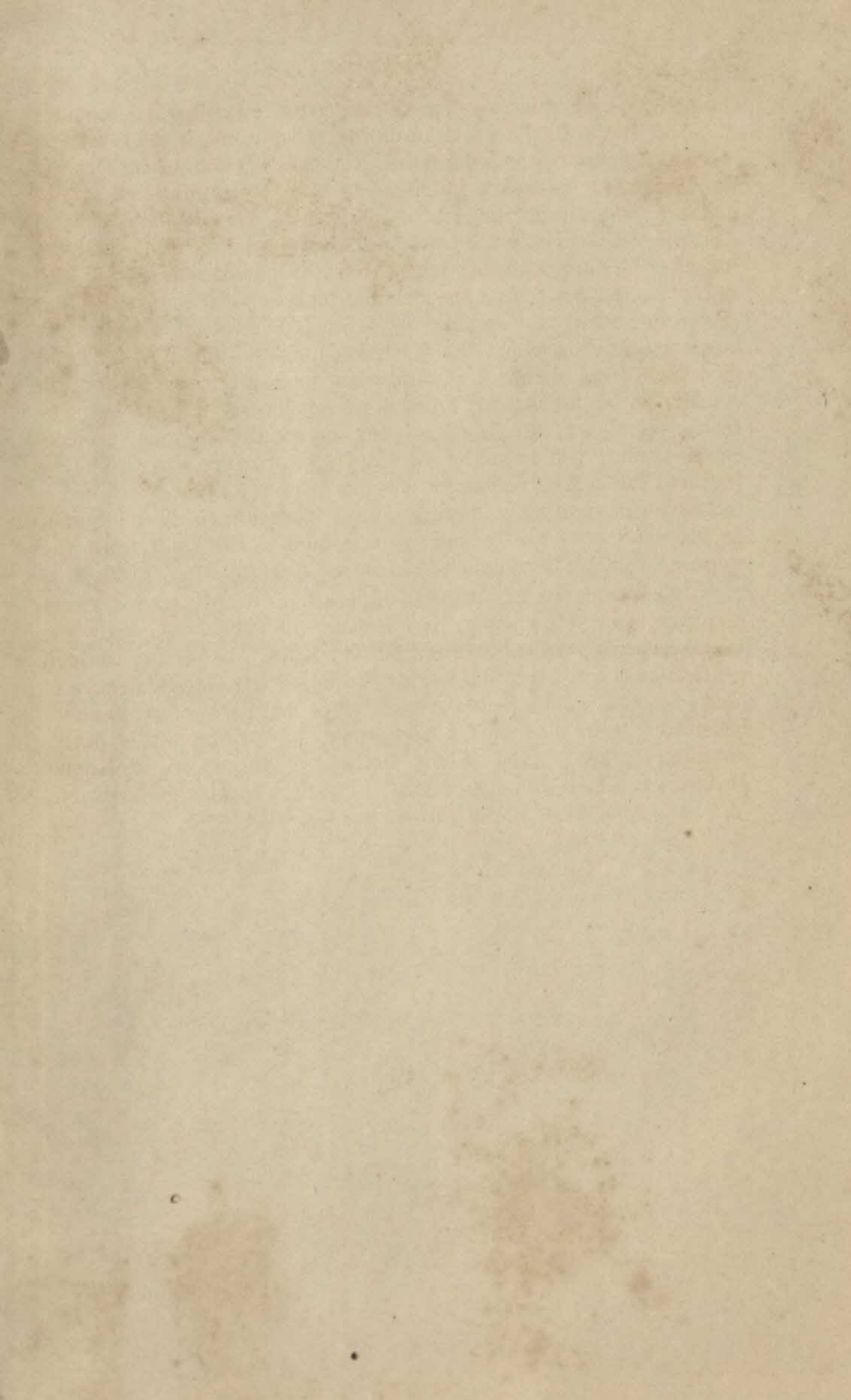
(4) Originating in the revolt of the oppressed against the caste system in all its severity in Tamilnad and in the resentment of the industrially underdeveloped South against the more developed North India, and deriving inspiration from the antiquity and glory of Tamil political achievements, culture and literature, the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (Dravidian Progressive Federation) first began in 1949 as yet another social reform movement. But the dynamism of its founder and leader, C. N. Annadurai, a powerful orator and a very popular figure in Tamilnad, made it in a very short time a mass organization. Directly and in a big way, it first entered into politics in 1957 when it contested in the General elections. Since then its growth has been phenomenal; in 1965-6 it had a membership of over 200,000 and over 2,000 party offices all over Madras state. This party fights against the Hindu social order, which, according to it, is responsible for all the suffering of our aggrieved, down-trodden and dispossessed masses, and against

the politico-economic as well as the linguistic and cultural dominance of North India. In the words of one of its followers, it fights against 'orthodoxy and avarice, Manu and Mammon'. It sought till recently to establish a sovereign independent socialist republic of Dravidanadu, comprising the states of Madras, Kerala, Mysore and Andhra, with full internal autonomy guaranteed for each of them, but after his party's victory in the 1967 elections Annadurai declared that it would not revive the demand for a separate Dravidanadu. (Press interview on February 23, 1967.) The ideal of this party is 'a new society' in which there are no capitalists and landlords and in which 'true democracy' and happiness are ensured for all. Annadurai has announced that his government would give priority to the solution of the food problem and for development projects which would yield immediate results. He also plans to tackle the problem of concentration of economic power, and to disperse industries in rural areas, reduce indirect taxation to the minimum, promote integrity and economy in administration and resist the imposition of Hindi as official language. (*loc. cit.*)

(5) The formation of a new all-India party in May 1967 deserves mention. Named the Bharatiya Kranti Dal (The Indian Revolutionary Party), its ideal is to establish 'a democratic society through peaceful and constitutional means', adopting the Gandhian way of harmony and non-violence. A number of members of parliament, legislators from nine states and others have joined this party. Mahamayaprasad Sinha (Chief Minister of Bihar), Ajoy Kumar Mukherjee (Chief Minister of West Bengal), and Humayun Kabir, M.P., are some of its important leaders.—*Editor.*











## CONTRIBUTORS

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A. Appadorai	R. K. Mookerji
Sri Aurobindo	K. M. Munshi
Abul Kalam Azad	K. Satchidananda Murty
S. N. Banerjea	E. M. S. Namboodiripad
A. C. Banerjee	Dadabhai Naoroji
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